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Asiatic Memorials

OF THE

CREATION, FALL, DELUGE, &c.

FROM

The Sacred Books of the Hindoos.

To which are added,

BRIEF ACCOUNTS

OF THE HINDU SACRED BOOKS;

Of the Sanscrit Language;

Of the Brahmins, their Religious Doctrines and Worship;

Of the AVATARS;

Of the Evidences in India of the Expectation of a SAVIOUR, &c. &c.

BY THE REV JOHN MARSH,

Rector of North Baddesley, and late Curate of Hursley, Hants.

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1823.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Manuscript Copy of the following WORK having been put into my Hands by the Author, with permission to print it, if it should be thought worthy of Publication—I have not hesitated a Moment in laying it before the PUBLIC, in the persuasion that it contains much that is interesting, and that it will not fail to prove acceptable and entertaining to many readers.

THE PRINTER

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PREFACE.

THE Compiler of the little Work, now in the hands of the Reader, has for many years past, paid much attention to the Researches of the Asiatic Society, and other discoveries made by the learned in India, relative to the ancient literature, and religious records, of that interesting country, and the objects he has had in view in making his inquiries, are the following —first, to inform himself what ancient Memorials the Hindoos have now among them—of the Creation of the World—of the Fall of man—of the Promise of a Saviour—of the Institution of the Sabbath—

of the Deluge, &c &c.—secondly, to see whether and how far these ancient memorials correspond with, and corroborate the Mosaic History, as to those important occurrences—thirdly, to discover the Origin and Antiquity of the Vedas and other Hindu Sacred Books, and to determine if possible, whether it may be supposed that the Hindoos borrowed their accounts from those of Moses, or that (as some Sceptics would have us suppose) Moses copied his from theirs—fourthly, to ascertain whether in very early times, any connection or communication subsisted between the Jews and the people of Hindustan:—and fifthly, to discover whether the Hindu notion of the the Incarnation of Vishnu, agrees at all with that entertained by the Jews concerning the Incarnation of Christ, and whether it may be supposed to have been derived from their idea of his being Immanuel—"God with us."

Such were the chief objects of the Compiler's inquiries what the result of them

has been, will be seen in the following pages.

If it be asked—why these Extracts, which have appeared already in one or more publications, are now again offered to the notice of the Public—it is answered, because, tho' curious and interesting, they are still but little known, and it is hoped, that by making them more so, the cause of truth may be in some degree, served by them

There are, we know, some persons who, tho' they protest against being considered as Unbelievers, are always ready to pronounce certain portions of Scripture History—such as that of the formation of Woman—that of the Serpent's tempting Eve—and some others of the same description—to be incredible, nay, and sometimes even to treat them with contempt and ridicule. Now, when it is known to such persons, that the historical facts they reject, have, from the very earliest ages to which we can reasonably re-

fer, been received and handed down as entitled to the profoundest reverence and credit, and this, not among an ignorant and barbarous people, but among the Natives of India—the earliest civilized and lettered people of the world—it is perhaps not unreasonable to hope that this additional testimony to the reality of those facts, may induce them to relax in their incredulity, and to be no longer "faithless, "but believing." Should it however be thought too much to expect that Unbelievers will be convinced by these testimonies of the Heathen, and no other end be answered by the present production of them, than that of confirming Believers in their Faith in Scripture, the Compiler will still have a highly gratifying consideration to recompense him for his trouble in collecting them

Note —"They may even be of solid "importance in an age, when some intel-"ligent and virtuous persons are inclined "to doubt the authenticity of the accounts

" delivered by Moses, concerning the pri-
" mitive world, since no modes or sources
" of reasoning can be unimportant, which
" have a tendency to remove such doubts."
See Sir W. Jones's Works, iii, 324. 8vo.

The Creation.

WITH the following very interesting description of the Creation the famous Hindu Book, entitled " The Ordinances of Me-" nu," opens, the solemnity and dignity of the style of which, as well as of the whole work, cannot but arrest the attention of every reader. Solemn and dignified however as the account is, it must still be obvious that it carries with it, in some stances, the appearance of Fable, and there is no one, I am persuaded, but who will readily admit, that it is in every respect far inferior to that given by Moses, whose simple and unadorned narrative excels in dignity and sublimity every other composition of which we have any know-

ledge. But the following description is, notwithstanding, highly worthy of our attention, since it corresponds, in several important instances, with the Mosaic History, and leaves us no room to doubt, that the facts and occurrences recorded in that history, however figurative the style of it may be, are strictly and circumstantially true.

As to the pretensions to *Divine Revelation* set up for this book by the Hindoos— these are claims, which certainly can never be conceded to it,, by those who are at all competent to judge what the evidences of a real divine revelation are. That it is, indeed, a very ancient work, and contains traditions as to some very important remote events, in which we are deeply interested, we readily acknowledge, and value it accordingly But when it's many blemishes and great absurdities are considered, no one can for a moment suppose it ever to have had the sanction of Heaven, or that the Author was any thing more than a frail, and in some respects, perhaps, an artful and designing man

" Laws of Menu.

" CHAPTER I

" *On the Creation*

" MENU sat reclined with his attention
" fixed on one object the supreme God,
" when the divine Sages approached him,
" and after mutual salutations in due form,
" delivered the following address. Deign,
" sovereign Ruler, to apprise us of the sa-
" cred Laws, &c.

" He being thus requested by the great " Sages, saluted them all with reverence, " and gave them a comprehensive answer, " saying,

" Be it heard!

" This Universe existed only in the first " divine idea yet unexpanded, as if in- " volved in darkness, imperceptible, un- " definable, undiscoverable by reason, un- " discovered by revelation, as if it were " wholly immersed in sleep.

" Then the Sole Self-existing Power, " himself undiscerned, yet making this " world discernible, appeared with undi- " minished Glory dispelling the gloom.

" He having willed to produce various " beings from his own divine substance, " first with a thought created the Waters, " and placed in them a productive Seed.

" The Seed became an Egg bright as " Gold, and in that egg he was born " himself, in the form of Brahma, the " great forefather of all Spirits.

" The Waters are called Nárá, because " they were the production of Nárá or the

" Spirit of God, and since they were his
" first Ayana or place of motion, he thence
" is named Náráyana, or moving on the
" waters.

" From that which is—the first Cause—
" not the object of sense, existing, not
' existing, (i e to our perception) with-
" out beginning or end, was produced the
" divine Male, famed in all worlds under
" the appellation of Brahma *

" He gave being to Time and the divi-
" sions of time, to the Stars also, and to
" the Planets

" Having divided his own substance, the
" mighty power became half-male, half-
" female, and from that female he pro-
" duced Viraj

" Know me, O most excellent of Brah-
" mens, to be that person whom the Male
" Power, Viraj, produced by himself

" It was I, who, desirous of giving
" birth to a race of men, first produced

* Swayambhuva or Adam was Brahma himself in a human form. See A R v, 246.

" ten Lords of created beings eminent in
" holiness."

See Institutes of Menu, chap. I.

An account similar to the foregoing, is to be found in the Manava Sastra, and the following passage, which is extracted from, and said to be the Essence of, the Vedas, is equally, if not more interesting, as being more simple, and therefore more agreeable to the Mosaic History

" The Supreme Being alone existed,
" afterwards there was universal darkness,
" next, the watry ocean was produced by
" the diffusion of virtue, then did the
" Creator, Lord of the Universe, rise out
" of the Ocean, and successively frame
" the Sun and Moon which govern day and
" night, whence proceeds the revolution
" of years, and after them he framed hea-
" ven and earth, the space between, and
" the celestial region."

See Asiatic Researches, v, 361

The above is called the grand expiatory Text, and every Priest is required to repeat it three times in every day.

The following extracts are from the Rigvéda, and are thought to be particularly worthy of notice, as being strikingly descriptive of the state of things previous to the Creation.

"Then was there no entity nor non-"entity, no world, no sky, nor ought "above it, nothing any where in the "happiness of any one no water deep "and dangerous Death was not, nor "immortality, nor distinction of day and "night But *That* breathed without affla-"tion Other than *Him*, nothing existed "which since has been Darkness there "was, this universe was enveloped with "darkness, but that mass which was co-"vered by the husk, was at length pro-"duced by the power of Contemplation." See Asiatic Researches, vol viii, p 404.

"Originally this Universe was indeed

" *Soul* only, nothing else whatsoever ex-
" isted, active or inactive *He* thought,
" I will create worlds thus he created
" these worlds, Water, Light, &c He
" thought, these are indeed worlds, I will
" create Guardians of worlds thus *he*
" drew from the waters, and framed and
" embodied Being," &c. &c.—See A R.
viii, 421

We might here add many other remarkable passages that occur in the Vedas, relating to the Creation, but as they are similar in their purport to these we have already given, it would be useless to multiply them

Tho' it is not pretended that these passages throw any new light on the History of the Creation as delivered by Moses, yet they shew that the same, or similar ideas, as to the mode in which that great work was effected, anciently prevailed among the inhabitants of this singularly interesting country, and this, it is conceived is a matter of some importance, and worthy of the attention of those who are scrupulous of

receiving the testimony of Moses as to this great event. For if we consider that it is pretty clearly ascertained, that the ancient inhabitants of India were the immediate descendants of the sons of Chus, that they were never in a barbarous or uncivilized state, but were eminent in the earliest times, for their knowledge both of arts and of sciences, we shall find no reason to be surprised that they should have possessed a knowledge of the traditions prevalent among their forefathers, relative to the Creation or see cause to suspect that their accounts were borrowed from those of Moses, and the inference from this consideration must be obvious.

It is here only to be observed farther, that the Hindu Books speak of *more than one* world They say that Adam and Eve were created for the multiplication of the human species, after that *New* Creation of the world which the Brahmins distinguish as the *Lotos* Creation

By the Burmas the Universe is called *Logha*, which signifies successive destruc-

tion and reproduction They suppose an infinite number of worlds to have existed, one immediately succeeding the other, so that when one is destroyed, another exactly like it, arises

See A. R. vol. v, 291, and vi, 180.

This notion of a succession of worlds was for ages confined to the people of the East, and would, no doubt, not many years since, have been thought a fanciful one by the Learned in Europe A somewhat similar notion has, however, of late been entertained and promulged in this quarter of the world, by the Geologists. Some of the Professors of this science have given it as their opinion, that the Deluge was not a cause sufficient to occasion the disorder and wonderful transpositions which they discover to have taken place in the internal parts of the Globe of the Earth they have therefore ventured to conjecture, that a world existed before this on which we live, and that this, being by some means or other destroyed, our pre-

sent world was formed out of the ruins of the one preceding it, and it must be admitted, that there is nothing said in the Mosaic History to contradict it Still, however, we can at present consider the theory set up, only as resting on conjecture, and difficult indeed, we are persuaded, will be found the attempt to prove it to have any better foundation than that of conjecture.

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CHAPTER II.

The Formation of Man and Woman.

IN the Second Veda, the Supreme Being is introduced as speaking thus "From "me Bráhma was born he is Pitama or "the Father of all men He is Aja and "Swayambhu or Self-existing From him "proceeded Swayambhuva,* who is the first "Menu He is also called Adima, which "signifies the *First* His Help-meet is "called Satarupa She is also called Adimá in the feminine gender, and Iva, or "the female energy of nature"

* Swayambhuva is Brahma in a human form, or the first Brahma for Brahma is man, both individually and collectively A R v, 247.

And in one of the Upanishads (appendices) of the same book, Viraj, or the first created male, is described as follows "Next, looking round, that primeval "Being saw nothing but himself He felt "not delight, and therefore man delights "not when alone He wished another, and "instantly he became such as is Man and "Woman in mutual embrace He caused "this his own-self to fall in twain, and "thus became a Husband and a Wife. "This blank is therefore completed by "Woman He approached her, and thence "were human beings produced"

Asiatic Researches vol viii, 141

In the Matsya Purana a similar account of the formation of woman is also given It is there said, that "Brahma having assumed a human shape, one half of his "body sprung from him without his experiencing any diminution, and out of "it he framed Satarupa"—A R. v 247

I leave my readers to compare these accounts with that of Moses in the 2d chap

of the book of Genesis; and shall only observe, that, how extraordinary soever his description of the formation of Eve may be, it was not his invention, but that which was in his time generally received and credited—not by the family of Abraham only, but by other nations equally civilized and intelligent.

CHAPTER III.

The Sabbath

THE Hindoos divide the year into weeks of seven days each, and name those days after the Sun, and Moon, and Planets, in the same manner as we do in Europe, but it does not appear that they have any, the least, reverence for one day more than for another, or that they observe any day periodically as a day of rest from labour

The Mosaic account, however, of God's having created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, is not without countenance in the Hindu Books Thus, in the

Institutes of Menu, it is said, that "since "the minutest particles of visible nature "have a dependence on the *six* emana-"tions from God, the Wise have accord-"ingly given the name of Sárira, or de-"pending on *Six*, to his appearance in vi-"sible nature."

Menu is also represented as saying—"He whose powers are incomprehensible, "having thus created me and this universe, "was again absorbed in the Supreme Spirit "—changing the time of Energy for the "time of *Repose*."

It seems probable that the observance of the Sabbath fell into neglect before the Flood, and that it was by no means generally revived afterwards. In the family of Shem, a reverence for it might have been, and I suppose was preserved and delivered down to Abraham, who is said to have kept the ways of the Lord, of which the observance of the Sabbath was probably one but his family seem to have entirely forgotten it during their bondage in Egypt, and a strong injunction appears to have been re-

quisite, in order to enforce the re-observance of it

Note —The only instance I have met with in any Hindu Book, of even an allusion to the Sunday as a day of rest from labour, is in the Hetopadesa, or Fables of Vishnu Sarman In one of these, a Deer, which had been caught in the toils of the hunters, entreats the Jackal to gnaw his bonds and set him at liberty—to which the Jackal replies, that " the toils are made of " leather, and that as it was Sunday, he " could not touch them with his teeth "

See Hetopadesa, p 39.

CHAPTER IV.

The Fall

SIR William Jones, when speaking of the Scripture History of the Creation, observes, "We cannot but believe that these "facts, viz. those recorded by Moses, Gen "I, &c were delivered by tradition from "the first pair, and related by Moses in a "figurative style, i e in the symbolical "mode of writing adopted by Eastern "Sages, and, if this were the time for "such illustrations we might produce the "same account of the Creation and the "*Fall*, expressed by symbols, very nearly "similar, from the Puranas, and even from

" the Vedas, which appear to stand next
" in antiquity to the five books of Moses."
Asiatic Researches, iii, 424.

From these very striking remarks, I was strongly encouraged to hope, that, either in the Works of Sir W. Jones, or in the Asiatic Researches, I should meet with extracts from one or other of the books he mentions, detailing the circumstances of the Fall of Man, somewhat similar to those related by Moses, but I have not yet been able to discover any that correspond at all with his narrative. It is however most true, that the Brahmins teach, " that man is a *fallen* creature, that " his Soul is tainted and debased by sin,"* and that it is necessary for him to be *Dwija*, i. e twice-born or regenerated, before his soul can be re-united to the Supreme Spirit from which it emanated And on the ground of this belief, no doubt it is, that they found their doctrines of the

* See Asiatic Researches, vol i, p. 238 and 424

Metempsychosis, and of the expediency of those grievous mortifications and severe penances, to which the Devotees in India are continually subjecting themselves. The first of these teaches, that after death the soul passes thro' a variety of animal bodies and etherial mansions, as states of farther trial and purgation, preparatory to its reunion with the divine source from which it sprung * the other, that the guilt contracted by the soul in this sublunary state, is by these mortifications expiated, and that it becomes by its contempt of the world, by its indifference to pleasure and to pain, and by the ascendency it has gained over all earthly and sensual affections, refined and innocent, and fit to return to the pure fountain of all Spirits. These doctrines, it must be obvious, are founded on the supposition that man is in a degenerate state, and that the soul has lost its pristine perfection and likeness to its divine original—for, were not man be-

* See Asiatic Researches, vol iv, 145.

lieved to be degenerate, and his soul polluted, why should such purgations and expiations be thought necessary? If it be asked, to what source we are disposed to trace this belief of the Fall, which it is observable, prevails among men of all religions in the East, we answer—not to the conclusion which reason might lead us to form, tho' a very just one, viz—that an all-perfect God could not have formed such an imperfect and sinful creature as man now is, and that therefore he must have fallen from a more perfect state—but to some remaining, tho' obscure, notion of the fact which we, Christians, believe actually took place, handed down thro successive generations, from the great progenitor of the human race and his immediate descendants For, believing as we do, that the first parents of mankind were beguiled by the Evil Spirit in the manner which Moses has described, we cannot but also believe, that a tradition of an occurrence so materially affecting the human race, must have been, in some degree, retained

in memory, as well among the Heathen nations—especially the early civilized ones—as in the family of Abraham And when we are better acquainted with the voluminous writings of the Hindus, than we are at present, we have good reason to believe, that we shall find the Mosaic history in this instance circumstantially corroborated by their testimony

Note.—It is here to be farther observed, that the Hindoos teach not only that man is fallen and become corrupt, but that *all nature* is also contaminated, and that even the *Earth* labours under some defilement—a sentiment, which it is believed could only spring from certain corrupted traditions relative to God's cursing the ground in consequence of man's transgression.

CHAPTER V

Paradise and the Cherub with the flaming Sword

THE Progenitors of Mankind, says Wilford, lived in the mountainous tract of country, which extends from Balkh and Candahar, to the Ganges We may therefore, he adds, reasonably look for the terrestrial Paradise in that country, for it is not probable, that Adima and Iva should have removed to any great distance from it Accordingly, we find there, such a spot as answers minutely to the Mosaic

description, a circumstance, not to be met with any where else, perhaps, on the surface of the globe A small brook winds through the Tágávis of Bámiyan, and falling into a small lake, divides itself into four heads, forming so many navigable rivers The first river mentioned in Scripture is called Phison, which it is there said compasseth the whole land of C'havila where there is Gold, Bdellium and Sardonyx This river, it is probable, is the present Landi-Sindh, and the land of C'havila the country of Cabul Gold is found in the sands of the Indus above Derbend but in greater quantities about Cabulgram. It is found, also, near the surface of the earth in these parts This country abounds also with divers sorts of precious stones, such as the Lapis Lazuli, the Hyacynth, the Crystal, and Marbles of various colours —The second Scripture river, viz the Gihon—which is described as compassing the land of Ethiopia or, as it is named in the margin of our Bibles, *Cush*—is the Hermend, for the country

which it encompasseth, is the original land of Cush, according to the Puranas, which begins near Candahar and includes a part of Persia.—The Hiddikel, or third river mentioned in Scripture as proceeding from the Garden of Eden, and which is described as going toward the East of Assyria, is probably the river of Bahlac, which flows through the eastern parts, and seems to have been once the eastern boundary of the land of Hassarah or Hazárah. This country extends from Herát to Bahlac and Bámiyan, and is most likely the land of Arsareth, to which we read in the 2d book of Esdras, chap. xiii. v. 45, the ten tribes of Israel wandered after the destruction of their own kingdom.—Of the *fourth* river, viz. the Euphrates or Phrath, no particulars are mentioned by Moses as to its course, &c., but it is, without a doubt, the Cunduz. The City of Bámiyan, which is within the district here described, was looked upon as a most holy place, and hence it was that we sometimes find it

called "Para-Bámiyan, or Bámiyan the "*pure* and *holy*" And for the same reason we may suppose, the country near it to have been called "*Para-desa*," the pure and holy country This district, tho' now barren, is positively declared by the Hindu Books, to have been otherwise formerly, "and certain it is, says Wilford, "that the soil in the vallies is most fertile, and the whole district is still a most enchanting spot"

See Essay on Mount Caucasus, Asiatic Researches, vol vi.

It appears in Scripture, that Adam and Eve after they were expelled from the Garden of Eden, were sent, or betook themselves, to the countries to the Eastward of it, for it was at the eastern entrance of the Garden that God placed the Angel with the flaming sword—evidently, because it was from that quarter, that it was supposed probable, that they might attempt to return Now, as the Puranas assure us that Swayambhuva or Adam, and

the earliest of his posterity, had their abode on the mountainous regions between Cabul and the Ganges, that is, to the *eastward* of the spot which we have here fixed upon as the situation of Paradise, we may from this circumstance, we think, justly conclude that *This* was indeed the actual scite of it, and that they who place it on the confluent streams of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, are probably mistaken. For certainly, if regard be now to be had to the Mosaic description, the district which Wilford has pointed out as that in which it was situated, must be admitted to be the one which best answers to that description.

Having mentioned the Cherubim, or Angel, with the flaming sword—it is obvious here to observe, that at the entrance of the passes leading to the place where we suppose was the Garden of Eden, and to the eastward of it, the Hindoos have placed a destroying Angel, who generally is represented like a Cherub, that

is, like a young man with the countenance, wings, and talons of the Eagle" This is Garuda, or the Bird on which the Gods and their Messengers are said to be conveyed, and he seems to answer in some respects to the Vulture in the story of Prometheus of the Western Mythologists. But be this as it may, it appears clearly, from a passage in the Scanda Purana, that Garuda, whatever he was, had his Sthan, or place of abode, in the forest of Garutman, near to Bamiyan, in which forest or tract of country, we have supposed the Eden of Moses to have been situated, and consequently in which the Cherub with the flaming sword was placed So that, if any one should be inclined to think the story of the all-devouring Garuda to have any connexion with, or relation to, the terrific guardian of Paradise, his supposition will not, perhaps, be thought wholly without probability

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The possessions of Cardaméswára, who is believed to be the Cain of our Scriptures, were in the hills along the banks of the Ganges to the eastward of the rest of mankind.

The account given in the Hindu Books of this person is—that he slew* his brother *Dacsha* as he was performing a sacrifice

Cardaméswára had a son whose name was Capila. He was a person of great piety and devotion, and his character corresponds very exactly with that of Enoch mentioned in our Scriptures But it should be observed, that the Enoch who is said in Gen chap. v to have "walked with God," and to have been "translated," was not the son of Cain, but of Jared.

It may seem strange, says Wilford—speaking of the Patriarchs and their families before the Flood—that the posterity of Cain should be so much noticed in the Puranas, whilst that of the benevolent Ruchi (Seth) is in a great measure disregarded, but it is even so in the Scripture history of the Anti-deluvian families, in which little

is said of Seth and his posterity, whilst the inspired writer takes particular notice of the descendants of Cain, and to what a high degree of perfection they carried the arts of civil life "They became mighty "men, and were of old, men of renown"

Out of Five Menus who ruled as Lords or Patriarchs between Adam and the Flood, *Four*, according to the Puranas, were of the posterity of Cain

See Asiatic Researches, vi, 485

CHAPTER VI

The Deluge.

OF all the events which are recorded in the Hindu Books to have happened in the ancient world, that of the Deluge, or Flood, is most frequently spoken of and alluded to In the Vedas, indeed, it has not yet been found that any mention is made of it, but it is described in many of its most remarkable circumstances in several of the Puranas, particularly in the first, entitled Matsya or the Fish, of which it forms almost the entire subject and it

is believed, that not fewer than three of the Avatars, or incarnations of Vishnu, have some relation to it *

A very minute account is also given of it in the Eighth Book of the Bhagavat—an Epic Poem written by Vyasa, not less than three thousand years ago—and the following is an exact translation of the story there related. Tho' evidently in some instances, fabulous, it is nevertheless so circumstantial and descriptive, that no one can doubt for a moment, what the event was of which it was intended to record the memory

" At the close of the last Calpa, there " was a general destruction occasioned by " the sleep of Brahma, whence his crea- " tures in different worlds were drowned " in a vast ocean. A holy King named

* Maurice says, that the united evidence of the three first Avatars, reflects a light upon the event of the Deluge, greater than has yet radiated upon it from any page of gentile antiquity

See Indian Antiquities, ii 280

' Satyavrata, then reigned, a servant of
" the Spirit which moved on the waves.
' The Lord of the Universe loving the
" pious man, and intending to preserve him
" from the sea of destruction caused by
" the depravity of the age, thus told him
' how he was to act In seven days from
' the present time, the three worlds will
" be plunged in an Ocean of Death, but
" in the midst of the destroying waves a
" large vessel sent by me for thy use shall
" stand before thee Then shalt thou take
' all medicinal herbs, all the variety of
seeds, and accompanied by seven Saints,
' encircled by pairs of all brute animals,
' thou shalt enter the spacious Ark, and
continue in it secure from the flood on
one immense ocean Heri (Vishnu, the
Preserver) having thus directed the Mo-
' narch disappeared, and Satyavrata hum-
" bly waited for the time which the ruler
" of our senses had appointed At length
' the Sea over-whelming its shores deluged
the whole earth, and it was soon per-
' ceived to be augmented by showers from

"immense clouds He still meditating on "the command of Bhagavat, saw the vessel advancing, and entered it, having "conformed to the doctrines of Heri "The God being invoked by the Monarch, "appeared again in the vast ocean, in the "form of a Fish with a stupendous horn, "on which the King, as he had been before commanded by Heri, tied the Ship "with a Cable made of a vast Serpent, "and happy in his preservation, stood "praising the destroyer of Madhu. When "the Monarch had finished his hymn, the "primeval Male, Bhagavat, who watched "for his safety on the great expanse of "waters, spoke aloud to his own divine "essence, pronouncing a sacred Purána "Then Heri, rising together with Bráhma, "from the destructive deluge which was "abated, slew the Demon Hayagriva who "had stolen the Vedas during the sleep "of Bráhma, and recovered those sacred "books

'Satyavrata, instructed in all divine and "human knowledge, was appointed in

"the present Calpa, by the favour of "Vishnu, the seventh Menu, surnamed "Vaivaswat"

See Asiatic Researches, i, 230.

It is particularly worthy of notice, that, in the foregoing story, the occasion of the Deluge is declared to have been "the '*Depravity* of *Mankind*"—in which respect, as well as in many others, it agrees so exactly with the account given in our Scriptures, that no one can doubt but that the same event is intended in both of them

Mr Bryant—speaking of the Deluge—says, that "if that event really happened "at the time recorded by Moses, those "nations whose monuments are preserved, "or whose writings are accessible must "have retained memorials of it, and the "fact is, they *have* retained such memo- "rials"

Indeed, "there is scarcely any circum- "stance, he observes, however minute, "mentioned by Moses, concerning Noah

" and the Ark, but what is recorded in the " family of Ham "

Nay, he farther gives it as his opinion, that " the genuine Osiris of Egypt was " Noah, and that the principal religious " rites, instituted in honour of him, were " confessedly commemorative of a person, " who was lost and consigned for a time, " to darkness, as Noah was in the Ark "

See Analysis, vol ii, p. 237.

Sir William Jones also asserts, that the Deluge is an historical fact admitted as true by every nation, to whose literature we have access A R iii, 425.—And speaking of the Chinese, in his 7th Discouse to the Asiatic Society, he says " I may assure you after full inquiry, and consideration, that they like the Hindoos, believe this earth to have been wholly covered with water," which in works of undisputed authenticity, they described as " flowing abundantly, then subsiding " and separating the higher from the " lower age of mankind."

A R vol ii, p 376.

If the assertion in the Hindu writings be true, that the waters, on retiring after the Deluge, carried away all the remains of human bodies with them into the Ocean, this will account for no human bones being found imbedded in subterranean rocks in a petrified state, no instance of this, as the Geologists tell us, having ever yet been discovered.

See A R. vi, 240.

CHAPTER VII.

The Ark on Mount Ararat

THE famous peak of C'haisá-ghar is situated on the road between Gazni and Derá Ismahil It is the general and uniform tradition of that country, that Noah built the Ark on the summit of this mountain, and there embarked; that when the Flood assuaged, the summit of it first appeared above the waters, and was the resting place of the Dove The Ark itself rested about half way up the mountain, on a projecting plain of a very small extent. There, a place of worship was erected, and near to

it is a hermitage inhabited by several Dervishes. The Buddahists, who were the oldest inhabitants of that country, are, we are told, of the same opinion as to the place where the Ark rested The Brahmins however insist, that as it is declared in their sacred books that Satyavrata, *i e* Noah, made fast the Ark to the famous peak, called from that circumstance, Naubanda, he must have built it in the adjacent country Nau a ship, and Banda to fasten, is the name of a famous peak situated in Cashmir to which Pilgrims from all parts of India resort, who having scrambled up the rocks to a certain Cavern, which they consider as a holy place, never proceed any farther. The story, as it is recorded in the Puranas, is in abstract as follows "Satyavrata having built the Ark, "and the flood increasing it was made "fast to the peak of Nau-banda with a ca-"ble of prodigious length During the "flood, Brahmá, or the creating Power, "was asleep at the bottom of the abyss; "but Vishnu, the Preserver, took the Ark

'under his protection, and wafted it over the deep in safety But, however the 'Buddahists and Brahmins may differ as 'to the country in which the Ark was 'built, they are unanimous in asserting 'that it rested on the mountains of Arya-'varta, Aryawart or India—an appellation 'which has no small affinity with the 'Ararat of Scripture These Mountains 'were a great way to the Eastward of the plains of Shinar, or Mesopotamia, to 'which Nimrod and others betook them-selves, and there can be no doubt, 'but that they had travelled from a very 'distant country, in the East before they "settled there"

See Asiatic Researches, vi, 521

Note — We generally speak of Noah's building the Ark as if it were the work of a short time and as if no hands but his own were employed in the execution of it But if we consider, that the Ark was at least 450 feet in length, 75 in width, and 45 in height, that it consisted of three sto-

ties, and measured 42,413 tons, and consequently contained nearly twenty times the number of square feet that the largest Ship, built in modern times, does, we shall soon perceive, that the construction of such an immense vessel was a most wonderful undertaking, and that unless Noah had been divinely instructed, it would have been more than the art of man, in those days, could have accomplished. What precise length of time was occupied in the execution of the work, we are no where told, but many years must, no doubt, have been spent, and the labour of many artificers employed, before it could have been completed, so that it must have spoken long and loudly to the world, the intentions of the Almighty, and if they had not been lost to all sense and apprehension of danger, they must, one would think, have repented, and turned, in humility and fear, to the God whom they had so greatly offended, and whose anger they had so justly excited. But it should seem, that "they were all gone out of the right way,"

that sensual pleasures, and worldly per-suits, occupied all their time and concern, and that there was none—" no not one"—except the family of the righteous Patriarch, who believed and had a just apprehension of the divine threatnings Judging indeed from the extraordinary depravity of mankind at this time, we may suppose, that so far from fearing the vengeance of heaven, they looked upon Noah as a credulous enthusiast, and made his faith and fears, as those of truly religious men are often made by the infidel and libertine now, a subject of contempt and ridicule

But still, Noah believed God, and went on with his work. and the event was—that " by his Faith he was saved " And thus will " Wisdom " always " be justified " of her children "

word of it being to be found in the genuine copies of the Padma. The story therefore, as it is given in the Researches just referred to, must be rejected as unworthy of credit. But though the passage be indeed a forgery, we are not therefore to conclude that the several facts stated in it, are without evidence in the Hindu Books, for the truth is, that most, if not all of them, are to be found mentioned in many others of the Puranas, though in less connected and explicit terms than in the pretended extract.

It is acknowledged in the Puranas, that the the three sons of Swayambhuva (the usual name of Adam, but meaning in this place *Noah*) are incarnations of the Trimurti, that is, of the three persons of the Hindu Godhead, and they are declared to have been created by the Deity, that being free from the defilement of human conception, they might be fit persons to marry the three daughters of the first man. Thus Dacsha or Abel is said to have been Brahma, Cardama, or Cain, Siva, and the be-

nevolent Ruchi, or Seth, Vishnu. One of Ruchi's names or titles is also Sarma or Sama, Siva is likewise called Ha and Ham and Bráhma, or Dacsha, is declared to be Prajapati, evidently meaning Shem, Ham, and Japhet If it be asked how we account for this confusion of persons, and why we understant Noah and his sons to be intended, when the names of Swayambhuva, Dacsha, Cardama, and Ruchi, *i e* Adam, Abel, Cain, and Seth, are expressed —it is answered that the Hindoos suppose that the world has undergone several transformations or renovations, and that at each of these renovations, the same events again take place, and the very same renowned personages reappear upon the scene of action, and hence it is, that we find the same three persons, viz. Sama, Chama, and Harshi, or Prajapati, born again to every Menu And it is observable, that in this supposition, the Hindoos are not singular, since the same notion appears to have prevailed among the

Western Mythologists Thus, at the renovation of the world which Virgil speaks of in his Pollio, he evidently considers another Trojan war, another Argonautic expedition, another rape of Helen, as the necessary concomitants of that great event, and supposes that the same famed heroes would again appear and signalize themselves

In the Maha Bharata section of the Adipurva, there is a passage relative to Noah and his sons more clear and express to our purpose Thus "to D'harma, or "the first man, i e the first man after the "Flood, it is said, were born three sons, "viz Săma, Căma, and Harsha, or Praja-"pati"

Japati signifies "the Lord of Man-"kind" The particle Pra is used intensively, to signify that he was what his name imports, *in a very great degree* It sometimes signifies also "venerable or "holy" And, hence, Prajapati means "the venerable Jápati, the Chief of the "animated creation"

One of Noah's sons is sometimes called Ila-pati which signifies "Lord of the "Earth." Both this name and Prajapati are synonomous with Jápati

Thus it appears, that the Hindu books agree with our Scriptures as to the identity of the persons who survived the Deluge, and there is, I believe, equally good reason for saying, that a similar agreement subsists between them, relative to the countries in which they, and their several families, settled themselves The country in which it is believed Noah took up his abode after the Flood was that in which the Ark rested, viz in Armenia, which lies to the north-west of India, and here, it should seem, the whole family remained, 'till, being greatly multiplied, it seemed good to divine providence that they should be separated The good old Patriarch therefore as directed by Heaven, assigned to each of the children of Shem, and Ham, and Japhet, the particular region, which was from this time to become the abode

of himself and his posterity The descendants of Shem, received their allotments to the south of Armenia Those of Ham were destined to the remote continent of Africa, whither, it should seem, Mizraim and Phut quietly retired. Japhet's destination was to the north of his brethren Here he multiplied exceedingly, and from hence, being limited by no boundaries, he sent forth Colonies far and wide, not only into all parts of the North, but to the East and West, into Asia Minor, and even into the intersected lands of Europe, called the Isles of the Gentiles.

This account of the first settlements of mankind after the Flood, is supported by Scripture, and the best records of antiquity, and what we collect from the Hindu books on the subject, corresponds with it

CHAPTER IX

The Abode of the Progenitors of Mankind

THE Town of Pámíyan, which is situated between Balach and Cabul, and consists of innumerable Caves or habitations cut out of a single Rock or Mountain, standing alone in the middle of a Valley, with the country adjacent, from Sistan and Samercand, to the Ganges, is said by the Natives of that country, to have been the abode of the Progenitors of Mankind, both before and after the Flood. There

are supposed to be no less than twelve thousand of those Caves in the town of Bámiyan, some of which are ornamented with sculpture, and of such extraordinary dimensions, that they are thought to have been Temples or places of religious worship. It is looked upon as a very holy place, and the followers of Buddah say, it was built by a holy person, whose name was Shama, and who, Wilford says, it appears from particular circumstances, was the same person as the Patriarch Shem, the son of Noah, and that his posterity lived there for several generations. In this country the sacred history of the Persians, places the first Temples that were ever erected, and here they also say, their holy instructors resided. This country is also said to have been the original abode of the Patriarch Abraham, who, we learn from the Hindu books, as well as from our own Scriptures, removed with his father, to distant countries, to the westward.

See Asiatic Researches, vol. vi, p. 467.

The foregoing account of the town of Bámíyan, and of the Excavations in and near it, is said to have been taken from the Buddah-dharma-charita, and is given by Mr. Wilford, in his Dissertation on Mount Caucasus, but as the book is scarce, and he could not obtain a sight of it, he hesitates to vouch for the accuracy of it But it is here to be observed, that the truth of the description does not rest on the authenticity of the Bud'ha-charita only, but on the far better authority of the Ayeen Acbery In this work, vol ii, p 208, Abul Fazil, who visited the mountainous country of Bamiyan with the Emperor Acbar, tells us, that "no less "than twelve thousand of these recesses, "or caves, were there to be seen, cut out "of the solid rock, all ornamented with "carving, and remarkable for three asto-"nishing Idols standing near them This testimony, confirmed as it is, by the reports of all those who have since travelled in that country, no one will question But it is not in the town and neighbourhood

of Bámíyan alone, that these caves are to be met with, the whole district is full of them, and it is observable, that where the Musulmans have not designedly injured and defaced them, as is the case at a place called Móhi, on the road between Bámíyan, and Bahlac, the paintings and ornaments still remain in a state of much perfection, tho' ages may be supposed to have elapsed, since they were used as habitations *

The three statues or idols, as Abul Fazil styles them, are carved out on the side of the mountain or rock, and adhere to it. They are erect, and stand in niches, in depth equal to the thickness of the figures. They are all of a colossal size, but the two which stand nearest together, are by far the largest, the height of these being not less than fifty cubits, whilst the smaller one is not more than fifteen. Of the two

* The excavations called the Syringes near Thebes in Egypt, travellers tell us, are painted throughout, with the most curious hieroglyphics, stained in the stone, the colours being still as strong and vivid as if they were but just laid on —See Bryant iii, 502

larger figures, one is thought to represent a Man, and the other a Woman, but who these were, cannot now be conjectured with the least probability of success Whether they were designed for Idols, and used as objects of religious veneration, cannot now be known, the probability is that they were, many of the caverns near them, and particularly one, the entrance to which is between the legs of the supposed male figure, being undoubtedly intended for temples All history agrees, that in the early ages after the Flood, the religious mysteries in use in all parts of Asia, and in Greece, were celebrated in temples under ground This it is well known, was the case at Eleusis and at Delphi and no one can suppose that the prodigiously lofty and magnificent excavations at Ellora, and in the islands of Salsette, and Elephanta, with others, in various parts of Egypt, could have been intended for any other purpose *

* In reading the Prophesy of Ezekiel it is impossible not to be struck with the very remarkable description given

Why these dark and dreary caverns should have been chosen for the celebration of religious rites, rather than edifices above ground, is difficult to say, but it has been thought that they were preferred from their resemblance to the Ark, to which

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in the 8th chap of the idolatrous worship which the Elders of the House of Judah had not only embraced, but even introduced into the temple of God in Jerusalem That it was no other than the under-ground worship observed by the Heathen in these subterranean temples, is most certain—for it was carried on "*in the dark*" in chambers, probably under ground—"on the walls of one "of which, the Prophet tells us, were pourtrayed the forms "of every creeping thing, and abominable beasts, and all "the idols of the House of Israel, and seventy of the Ancients of the House of Israel stood before them, with "their censers in their hands, offering incense" In another, he says, "Women were sitting, weeping for Tam-"muz" and in a third, "about five and twenty men are "described with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, "and their faces toward the East, worshipping the Sun

That the dark chambers, here mentioned, were intended to resemble the Cavern-temples at that time so much in use in Egypt and the East, we may be well assured, and that the different species of worship performed therein consisted of the vile rites of Osiris, i e of the Egyptians, and of those of the Sun and Fire worshippers in Persia, is as little to be doubted Profaned then, as the sanctuary of the holy God was, by these grievous abominations, no wonder that he should be provoked to "go far off from "it," and that he should resolve no longer to bear with a people, who could so ungratefully renounce his worship, and abuse his goodness

the sacred ceremonies of the early idolaters had perpetual reference, or from the natural love of gloominess to which it is said the Egyptians,* who probably were the first inventors of these temples, were peculiarly addicted

Maurice, in his Indian Antiquities, has represented the midnight orgies performed in these under-ground recesses as of a most horrible and heart-appaling nature and if this were, as it is believed it was, the designed effect of them, no wonder that Caves of Darkness should have been chosen for the celebration of them—the astonishing magnificence of these caverns, added to the silence, and awful gloom which reigned in them, being peculiarly well adapted to heighten the solemnity of the ceremonies, and to excite the dread

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* See Bryant's Analysis, iii 531

There can be no doubt but that these gloomy Caves gave an awful solemnity to the mysterious rites performed in them and that on this account they were chosen A fondness for secrecy and mystery may also be considered as a farther reason for giving them a preference

See Ezekiel viii

and dismay of the terror struck Votaries

It is a generally received opinion that the principal object of worship in these subterranean temples, was the Sun,* but

* It is a very interesting question, but one not easy perhaps to be clearly decided--What were the objects which after the Flood, first seduced mankind from the worship of the true God into Idolatry? It is generally thought that the Host of Heaven, the Sun, Moon and Stars, were the first which led them astray, and there can be no doubt but that these had their votaries very early But it seems more probable, that the rites and worship which had the Ark and the persons preserved in it, for their objects, prevailed before those of the Sun, &c It is not indeed improbable but that the Babylonians, who were the first Astronomers might have had a religious respect for both but it is certain, I believe, that wherever they settled after the dispersion they carried the Arkite rites and worship along with them Noah was worshipped under the title of the Divine Husbandman, a character, which it should seem, it was anticipated at his birth, he would have a claim to for it is said of him, Gen v, 29, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed"

The hieroglyphical character by which he was represented, was that of the Ox Under this figure he was long worshipped by the Egyptians and the religious regard now had for the Cow in India, is no doubt, a continuation of that ancient superstition

Why this animal should have been chosen as the fittest emblem of the Divine Husbandman, does not appear But as it was predicted of Noah, that he would be a benefactor to mankind by easing them of labour in the cultivation of the ground, which perhaps 'till his time was per-

from the total want of emblematical representations of the sun in the cavern temples in India, and the almost constant appearance of the Ling, and other idols, we may safely venture to assert that the Sun, if it was at all, was not the *only*, or *principal*, deity adored in them. If they really were temples of the sun, it is obvious to ask, how comes it to pass, that the Brahmins, who worship the sun, make no use of them, and seem often at a loss to explain the hieroglyphical characters, and mythological figures, found in them? To me it seems clear from these circumstances, and others which might be mentioned, that these were not Brahminical temples, but those of a sect that prevailed in India long before the time of their intrusion. In one whose acquaintance with the Indian history and

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formed by human labour alone, the probability is, that he was the inventor of the Plough, and was the first who saved man the sweat of his brow by making the labour of the Ox useful in husbandry, and hence this animal might have been thought the properest Hieroglyphic, under which to represent his character as the Divine Husbandman,

antiquities is so limited as mine is, it may seem, perhaps, presumption to hazard even a conjecture as to the time when these Temples were formed, and the people to whose superstition they were devoted. I cannot however but be of opinion, that they were the works of the scattered Cuthites, who settled in India soon after the dispersion,* that having for a time been devoted to the rites and ceremonies of their worship, they afterwards devolved into the hands of the Buddahists,† whose

* If the reason be asked why these works should be supposed to be of Cuthic origin, it is answered, because in the early times in which they were executed, no other people can be found of skill and ingenuity, equal to the accomplishment of them, and farther, because, in whatever other parts of the world we find this people to have settled, we there discover works of precisely the same astonishing description, as these we are speaking of, to have existed. In Egypt, indeed, there are some of them still to be seen in good preservation, and it is not very many centuries since remains of them might have been traced in Greece, Italy, Sicily, Palestine, &c.

Speaking of the Temples of Ellora, Salsett, Elephanta, &c. Bryant observes, that "they were undoubtedly the "works of the Cuthite Indians."

Analysis, vol. iii. 567.

† In speaking of the religion of Japan, Bryant observes, that, "to the Sinto religion which was the oldest in the

religion, tho' not exactly the same as that of the Cuthites, was in many respects very similar to it—and that they fell into disuse and ruin, on the persecution and suppression of this sect by the Brahmins. Whether this notion of their having been the Temples of the Buddahists will be generally allowed to be well founded, I will not pretend to judge, but there are so many reasons for believing that they were their's, that I have not the least doubt of it.

It is an opinion held, and well maintained by many of the first Scholars in India, that the religion and doctrines of Buddah prevailed, in the most remote

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"country was afterwards added the Budsc. This religion was more complicated than the former, and abounded with hieroglyphical representations, and mysterious rites. In this also, under the character of Buddah, we may trace innumerable memorials of the Ark, and of the persons preserved in it."

Analysis, vol. iii, 585.

There is no doubt, I believe, but that the Cuthites travelled into China and Japan, and as the Sinto religion seems to have consisted of divine honors paid to Noah, Ham and perhaps others of that family we may not unreasonably suppose it to have been carried into those countries by that wandering people.

times, all over Hindustan, and that they were not entirely supplanted by the present predominant system of the Brahmins 'till so late as the Ninth century of our æra The Brahmins themselves confess, that they and their tenets had not their rise in India, and the probability is, that they were not known there more than seven or eight centuries at the most before our Saviour But the Buddahists were a very ancient sect in India, so ancient, that its origin can not be guessed at with any probability of success. Indeed many of those who favour the opinion of the superior antiquity of the Brahmins, allow this Thus Sir W. Jones confesses that the School of Gotama or Buddah, was the oldest in India, and that the doctrines professed by the ancient Gymnosophists* were those of Buddah.

Mr Wilford has also told us, that the ancient town of Bamiyan was considered,

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* According to St Jerome and Clemens Alexandrinus, Buddah was the founder of the ancient Sect of the Gymnosophists. See Asiatic Researches, vol 1, 167.

at a very early period, as the Metropolis of the sect of Buddah, and that from hence it was called "Buddah-Bamiyan." From these circumstances it must, I think, be admitted, that we have good reason for believing that the doctrines and religion of the ancient Buddahs were prevalent in India long before those of the Brahmins; and that the vast excavations to be met with in different parts of the country, were their Temples may be asserted, I presume, with equal safety.* Indeed, in those of Ellora, many of the images are decidedly those of Buddah, and of his African attendants--witness that on the *Pillar* in the Indur Subba, and more particularly that in the Jugnath Subba. This last is described as a *large* figure, sitting cross legged, and having his hands in his lap, one

* Query.—If Sir William Jones does not admit this? When speaking of the Architecture and Sculpture of India, he mentions the Excavations of Canarah, and the Temples and Images of Buddah. But what ancient Temples are there now remaining of Buddah? unless these recesses are meant.

over the other, to which representation if we only add the circumstance, that it has, like all the other figures in this temple *curled* or woolly hair like an African, and no covering on the head, and it is as exact a description of all the acknowledged images of Buddah as could possibly be given. The only other evidence I have to adduce in proof of these temples having been those of Buddah, is from that on the island of Elephanta In this temple Vishnu is represented on one of the Altars "holding in his hands *Fruits* and *Flowers*" The ancient religion of the country required *bloody* sacrifices, but Buddah, the Avatar, forbad these, and allowed fruits and flowers only to be offered. May it not here be intended to represent Vishnu the Preserver, as approving this reform? and can we suppose that this would have been permitted in any other temple than one devoted to the worship of Buddah *

* The supposition that these subterranean temples were once those of Buddah, derives farther probability from the

I have here only to observe, that by the followers of Buddah, to whom it is believed these under-ground temples belonged, I would be understood to mean those ancient Sages, who in the most remote times, formed the school of Gotama in India, who taught much profound truth, and were known in the West, by the name of Gymnosophists These people, with their Scholars and followers, were very numerous in India, many centuries before the birth of our Saviour, and before the Brahmins were even known there And as their doctrines, and the System of Religion founded upon them, were then generally received by the great mass of the people, especially in the North-western parts of the Peninsula, there is, unquestionably, the best reason for contending that these temples were theirs, since, if they were not the Brahmins', as we are

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circumstance that the Worshippers of Buddah *at this day* use Caves in rocks for their temples

See Asiatic Researches, vol vii, 522

persuaded they were not, it is impossible to ascribe them to any other sect.

But it may be said, perhaps, that the Mythological figures and representations found in these temples are those of the Brahmins—i. e. are peculiar to their religious system. To this it is answered—that they are *those of the Country,* and were, it is believed, intended to represent and record what were the generally received fables of its inhabitants, for ages before the Brahmins set their feet in India.

Note.—It is generally supposed, that the Brahmins on their coming to India, engrafted the fabulous history of the country into their system, with a view of making it the more acceptable to the people they intended to convert to it.

CHAPTER X

The Tower of Babel.

THE short sketch of the history of mankind and of the world which Moses has given us in the eleven first Chapters of Genesis, closes with a very concise and obscure account of a presumptuous and mad attempt, by a particular colony, to build a splendid city, and raise a fabric of immense height, independently of the divine aid, and as it should seem, in defiance of the divine power, a project, which was baffled by means appearing perhaps,

at first view, inadequate to the effect, but ending in the total defeat of their purpose, and in the complete separation and dispersion of the projectors. The project we allude to, was the building of the Tower of Babel by Nimrod, and his numerous followers, the Cuthites or rebellious sons of Chus The origin of this enterprize, as far as we can judge from the evidences of Scripture and other histories, seems to have been this The Land of Armenia, or country in which Noah and his sons settled immediately after the Flood, being small and mountainous, became, in the course of a century or two, over-stocked with inhabitants, and it was found necessary that a separation should take place At this time, Noah was yet alive, and as to his Patriarchal authority the right of appointment belonged, so now by him the earth, so far as it was then known, was divided, and each branch of his family, at least, each of the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, received the portion of territory which Providence de-

signed for him In this division, the sons of Shem certainly had the advantage—they having obtained allotments in a fine and fertile country, contiguous to that of their nativity, and in which their fathers were then living, whilst their brethren were sent to regions, at present, unexplored, and far removed from their native land But whether it was at this supposed partiality, that the sons of Cush took umbrage, or that they were dissatisfied with their own particular allotment, in the distant continent of Africa, is impossible to be known This however is certain, that they were discontented, and that they refused to go to the country which had been assigned to them—either resenting the separation *generally* as a kind of *scattering* of their families, or considering their own particular destination, on account of its remoteness, as a species of banishment from their brethren Instead therefore of going to the West, as it was intended they should have done, they went to the Eastward, and there roved

about for a long time, perhaps 'till the death of Noah—when, having increased in numbers and power, and matured their purposes, they changed the direction of their course, and came to the plains of Shinar Here they seized upon that part of the country which in after times, was named Babylon, and Chaldea, and which lay in the region that had fallen to the lot of Assur—who, being unprepared for their intrusion, and incapable of resisting it, was compelled to retreat, and to build cities of defence against their farther inroads Having now as they thought, settled and secured themselves in a country they liked, and which it is probable, they had long envied Assur the possession of, they appear to have rapidly increased in numbers and strength, and in the arts of civilization, and their bold leader, it should seem, soon began to meditate the design of erecting a great and mighty empire One of their first undertakings was to build a magnificent City and a Tower, which should not only add to their renown by

its astonishing height, but be a kind of Standard to distinguish them, and for the Nation to resort to and stand by, that they might not be *scattered*, or, as perhaps was meant might not be compelled to remove to the distant land to which they had been destined As their whole conduct therefore was, from first to last, marked with the boldest impiety, and the most decided rebellion against the will of Heaven, we are not to wonder that the Almighty should "come down," as the Scripture speaks, to defeat their daring purposes, and to effect that by force which could not be, or at least, had not been, accomplished by Patriarchal authority

The means which the Scripture tells us, Divine Providence employed to accomplish its purpose, was, "to *confound their lan-*
"*guage,* so that they could no longer *un-*
"*derstand each other's speech,*" or proceed in their operations—Means, which, it *is true, some have supposed* inadequate to the effect, and the ancient heathen writers

mention a variety of fearful events, such as whirlwinds, earthquakes, and fiery meteors, as having contributed to produce it No good reason however appears for believing that any other expedient was resorted to, than that which Moses has specified The confounding of their language no doubt, caused in the first instance, misunderstandings—these probably led to disputes and contentions—these to angry quarrels and violent resentments—and all these together, to their complete alienation from each other, and ultimately to their dispersion Possible therefore tho' it was, that other, and those perhaps direful, means might have been made use of, to terrify the already distracted inhabitants, and to drive them from the spot they had unjustly usurped, yet as the Scriptures speak of no other than the confounding of their language, and this, as we have shewn, may be well believed to be a cause equal to the effect, no reason, as we have said, appears for our supposing that any more were employed, but

as we think, quite the contrary The intention of God, no doubt, was, that they should see that it was *his hand* that specially interposed to work their overthrow but this would not have been so obvious, had natural causes been had recourse to, nor would the tendency of them have been so likely to occasion that complete *scattering* of them, which it was the intention of Heaven should be effected *

The consequences which we read, immediately ensued from this extraordinary interposition of Providence was, that "they "left off to build the city, and the Lord "scattered them abroad over the face of "the whole earth." So that here we cannot but observe, that that very 'thing "which they," confident in their own schemes and inventions, intended should be for their security and glory, became to

* Well therefore may we question the truth of the stories which the old historians tell us, that dreadful calamities now befell the city, for since they were not wanted, we may safely conclude that they never occurred

them "the occasion of their falling" And the history altogether must unavoidably teach us, how weak and ineffectual must ever be the efforts of foolish men, to frustrate the Counsels of the Almighty—since He is able, as we see, by the mere act of his Will, to turn the very identical means which we employ for our preservation, into instruments of inevitable destruction.

And now, the City being deserted, and its inhabitants disunited, they appear, as both sacred and profane history testify, to have hastily fled into almost all parts of the known world. Some went off to the Westward, and settled in Egypt, and were afterwards known in the history of that country, by the name of "the Shepherds." —Others travelled still farther, viz into Palestine and Syria—whilst a third body went to the Eastward, and in process of time established themselves in the peninsula of India and became the principal people of that country, and indeed, the means of bringing it to that eminence in

arts and sciences, for which it was in after times, so renowned,

Considering then that the Hindoos are the descendants of the scattered Cuthites of Babylon, it would not be unreasonable that we should expect to find, in their ancient records, memorials of an event which so materially affected their family—and the fact is, that we actually do meet with such memorials—tho', as we must confess, they detail few particulars, and amount to little more perhaps than mere allusions to it In one instance, indeed, the migration of those of the Babylonians who betook themselves to Egypt, is expressly mentioned, and the account, if it may be depended on as authentic, is very interesting. It is said to be in the Padma Purana, and is in substance as follows

"After the building of the Padma-Man-
" dira on the banks of the Cumudvatí, the
" children of Sharma travelled a long time,
" until they arrived at the banks of the
" Cáli or Nilá Here their leader, in order

" to propitiate the Divinity of the country,
" addressed himself to Padmá-dévi, or the
" Goddess residing on the Lotos, who
" being moved by his devotions, at last
" appeared to him, and commanded him
" to erect a Pyramid in honor of her, on
" the spot where he then stood His as-
' sociates began the work, and raised a
" Pyramid two Cros long, one broad, and
" one high, in which the Goddess resided,
" and from her it was called Padma-Man-
" dira, or the Temple of the Goddess re-
' siding on the Padma or Lotos." Now that the Mandira first alluded to in this passage, was the Tower of Babel on the banks of the Euphrates, is highly probable, and indeed is the more so, as we know, from the best authorities, that a considerable body of the dispersed inhabitants of that city took refuge in Egypt We should however have been disposed to question their being the Children of Shama, (i e Shem) were it not that Mr Bryant tells us, that " Many of the line of
" Shem put themselves under the domi-

"nion of the Cuthites," and that the particular district in Egypt, in which the fugitives settled, was named *Sharmasthan*, after them. As to the second-mentioned Mandira, no one doubts but that this was the Pyramid raised on the banks of the Nile, at a place, at this day, called Babel. But, except that it was a place of worship—was very strong and capacious—and was probably dedicated to the same Divinity as the renowned Tower on the Euphrates had been, we know no more. It is true, that nothing is stated in this passage, which proves positively, that the building on the banks of the Cumudvati was the Tower of Babel on the Euphrates. The circumstances mentioned are, however, such as to afford a strong presumption that they were one and the same building. The fact of the people's leaving it as soon as finished, and this without any assigned reason for their so doing, added to that of their flight into Egypt, whither all history agrees, a large body of the inhabitants of Babel fled, after the desertion of their city,

being so peculiarly applicable to the case of the Babylonians, that little or no doubt can be entertained on the subject. But it is here to be observed, that this is not the only instance in which an allusion is made in the Hindu books to the Tower of Babel, and the fate of its presumptuous builders—for it is mentioned says Mr Wilford, in others of the Puranas besides the Padma, and it was the opinion of Sir William Jones, that " it would be made " to appear in time, that the fourth and " fifth Avatars, which are represented— " the one, under the figure of a Lion, is- " suing from a bursting Pillar of Marble, " to devour a blaspheming Monarch—and " the other, under that of a Mendicant " Dwarf, who beguiled and held in deri- " sion the magnificent Bali—are one and " the same story" (viz with that of the history of Babel) " related in a symbolical " style."

See Asiatic Researches, vol iii, p. 427.

These two Avatars appeared nearly to-

gether, at the beginning of the second age, *i e* about two hundred years after the Flood, and as they are, unquestionably, moral fables grounded on historical facts, it seems by no means an improbable conjecture, that they relate to the impious conduct of the two presumptuous Monarchs, Nimrod and Belus

See Asiatic Researches, vol. ii, p. 131.

On the whole then it appears, we think, highly probable, that the ancient Hindoos were not unacquainted with the daring enterprise of their ancestors, and that they have memorials of its fatal consequences tho', as they were not for their honor, they may not have chosen to record particulars.

Here then is the testimony of this ancient people to another remarkable event recorded by Moses—the truth of which, supported as it is, in every instance, and by every kind of evidence, can never be justly questioned

To this account we have only to add, that the Tower of Babel was not, as it is

generally represented, a *round* building, but a *square* one, consisting of seven stories, each retreating back from the front of the one below it It was built after the supposed form of Mount Meru, the immagined abode of the Gods, and was, it is probable, designed for a temple to the Host of Heaven, and if we suppose it to have been the *first* that was raised to the worship of false Gods, we shall not perhaps, be much mistaken in our conjecture

CHAPTER XI

The Origin and Formation of Nations

THERE are few subjects which have more engaged the attention, and at the same time, more puzzled the inquiries, of the Learned, particularly of Divines and Historians, than that of the Origin and Formation of Nations, the reason of which probably is because the only notices we have on this subject, that we can depend on for authentic information, are so extremely concise and wanting of facts,

as not only to leave occasion for much conjecture, but even to make it necessary to the formation of a complete and consistent system. To this circumstance, i e to the occasion given for conjecture, no doubt it is, that we owe the many and great variety of theories which the learned in different countries, have formed for the explanation of the rise and settlement of nations For had the accounts given by Moses been fuller and more circumstantial, less room would of course, have been left for the exercise of human invention, and the fewer vague notions should we have had to perplex and distract us in our inquiries.

Now, of the many systems already invented, none that we are acquainted with, appear so rational and probable so well supported by evidence, and so free from difficulties, as those of Mr Jacob Bryant, and Sir W Jones. Others, no doubt there are, that display as much learning, and equal, if not more, ingenuity, but there are few, if any, but their's, which have not

something visionary and fallacious in them, and which we are not obliged to reject for want of better support than the Author's fanciful imagination. An instance of the truth of this assertion we have in the system of the Abbé Pezron of France, whose theory is so absurd, and, as Mr. Bryant has shewn, so wholly unsupported even by his own authorities, that one scarcely can read it with patience, much less with satisfaction.

The two systems which we are disposed to approve and receive as the true ones, will of course be supposed to be similar in their general principles and conclusions, and they certainly are so, and yet, it is very remarkable that the Authors come to these conclusions by different roads, and by means of different sources of information. The one (Mr. Bryant) moves downwards from the parent stock, and shews from whence, and to what regions, the several branches of the family of Noah first migrated, where they ultimately settled,

and what nations afterwards sprung from them. The other (Sir W Jones) proceeds *upwards*, and beginning from a certain period, he traces the five principal nations of Asia to ***Three*** distinct families, and these again, to ***One*** common stock, and shews most satisfactorily, that the central spot from which they all must first have proceeded, was *Persia*, which, according to his geographical description of that country, included Armenia (Bryant's supposed "Land of descent," and first settlement after the Flood) within its limits And what he says of the nations of Asia, viz. "that they all sprang from three branches "of one stem," he affirms may be proved with equal ease and apparent certainty. "of the people of the *whole earth*," did occasion require it. To follow these writers thro' the long train of argument and evidence, by which they arrive at the point they presume to have established, viz that how different soever the human race may now be in features, language, habits, customs and degrees of civilization,

they all originated from one common stock, and proceeded from one and the same central country, and this, at a period not more remote than that usually assigned for these events, would be foreign to my purpose. The following short extract from Sir W Jones's last discourse on this subject which contains the result of his researches, is, however too interesting to be omitted, and we therefore give it, persuaded that it cannot fail to prove acceptable.

" From the testimonies adduced in my " six last discourses,* it seems, he says, to " follow, that the only human family after " the Flood, established themselves in the " Northern parts of Iran, (Persia) that as " they multiplied, they were divided into " three distinct branches – that the branch " of Yáfet was enlarged in many scattered " shoots over the North of Europe and " Asia, diffusing themselves as far as the

* Viz To the Asiatic Society

" Western and Eastern seas, and at length
" in the infancy of navigation, beyond
" them both—that they cultivated no li-
" beral arts, and had no use of letters, but
" formed a variety of dialects as their
" tribes were variously ramified—that, se-
" condly, the Children of Ham, who
" founded in Iran the monarchy of the
" first Chaldeans, invented letters, ob-
" served and named the luminaries of
" heaven, and contrived the old system of
" Mythology, that they were dispersed at
" various intervals, and in various colo-
" nies, over land and ocean—that the
" tribes of Misr, Cush, and Rama, settled
" in Africa, and India, while some passed
" from Egypt, Phenice, and Phrygia, into
" Greece, and Italy, and others moved by
" a northerly course into Scandinavia, and
" others thro' the passes of Imaus, into
" Cashgar, Eighur, Khata, and Koten, and
" as far as to the territories of Chin and
" Tancút, where letters have been used,
" and arts cultivated immemorially Nor
" is it unreasonable to believe that some

" of them found their way from the East-
" ern Isles into Mexico, and Peru, where
" traces were discovered of rude literature
" and mythology, analogous to those of
" Egypt and India,*--that, thirdly, the
" old Chaldean empire being overthrown
" by Cayumers, who reigned about 890
" years before Christ, other migrations
" took place, especially into India, while
" the rest of Shem's progeny peopled the
" whole Peninsula of Arabia,--and, lastly,
" that States and Empires could scarcely
" have assumed a regular form 'till fifteen
" or sixteen hundred years before the
" Christian Epoch, and that for the first
" thousand years of that period, we have
" no history unmixed with fable, except
" it be that of the turbulent and variable,
" but eminently distinguished Nation, de-
" descended from Abraham."

See Asiatic Researches, vol iii, p. 432

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* One of the great religious Festivals of the Mexicans is called the *Ramasitoa*

See Asiatic Researches vol i, p 426

Such, according to the theory of Sir W Jones, was the manner in which the three great branches of the family of Noah were spread abroad, and we have every reason to believe the facts to have happened, in a great measure, as he has described them.

Finding then, as we do, that they differ in no respect from those recorded by Moses, but, so far as his account goes, perfectly agree with it—finding, too, as we also do, that such a coincidence was not at all the object he had in view in his inquiries, and what is still more,* that the sources from which he drew his conclusions, were not the Scriptures—how obvious is the inference to be deduced from these considerations, viz that the accounts reciprocally confirm each other, and that even if the divine inspiration of Scripture were not considered, we should still be obliged in reason, to believe the Mosaic history to be true—since all that we can in any way learn, either of Man, or of the World, conspires to prove its truth, and that not in this instance only, but in all others.

But there is yet another point connected with this inquiry, which it seems desirable to have determined, and which therefore we feel interested in ascertaining. It is this—what was the *precise time* when "the "Earth was divided, and when the sons "of Noah separated, and retired to the "several stations which we suppose were "then allotted to them?" It is the general opinion of most writers on the subject, that the separation of mankind, and their removal into different regions, were subsequent to the Confusion of Tongues at Babel, and that this event led the way to the formation of Nations. But there are many objections to this suppposition, and if all the circumstances of the Scripture History be carefully attended to, there can be but little doubt, that it will soon be discovered to be erroneous It will appear, we think, from the account we have from Moses,—first, That at a certain period after the Flood, a regular Division of the earth, so far as it was then known, was made by Noah under the direction of the Almighty

—secondly, That this was done in the days of Peleg—thirdly, That, generally speaking, the several branches of the Patriarch's family, were obedient to the divine appointment, and withdrew immediately to their respective allotments—and, lastly, that with respect to the Dispersion from Babel, it will also, we think, be seen —that this was a distinct event from the Migration of families above alluded to—that it consisted comparatively of a *few* people, and was confined to a small portion of the earth—and did not happen 'till long after other parts of the world, were settled and peopled. To go thro' the proof of these facts may perhaps be thought tedious, but the inquiry is interesting, and not without its importance, and we therefore proceed to it

In the first place, we have in the 10th chap. of Gen a list given us of several of the generations of the Sons of Noah, and a description of the countries which had become their respective dwelling-places, and the chapter concludes with the fol-

lowing words by way of recapitulation—"These are the families of the Sons of "Noah, after their generations, in their "nations and by these were the nations "divided in the earth after the Flood." This chapter alone, would, we think, be sufficient to prove an early separation of mankind and commencement of civil communities But in that sublime passage of Scripture, called the Song of Moses, the same thing is asserted more expressly: "Remember (says the inspired Law-giver) "remember the days of old—consider the "years of many generations · When the "Most High divided to the nations their "inheritance, when he separated the Sons "of Adam, he set the bounds of the people," &c. Deut xxxii, 7

And, that this was always the received belief, we infer from the following words of St Paul, in his eloquent discourse to the people of Athens, "God," says he, "made of one blood, all nations of men "for to dwell on all the face of the earth, "and determined the bounds of their ha-

"bitations." Acts xvii. These passages shew, as clearly as words can shew, that a formal division of the earth was made by the appointment of heaven, and that "it "was done (as Mede observes) "in an "orderly manner, and not by a confused "irregular dispersion, wherein every one "went and seated himself as he thought "good" And—secondly, that this took place "in the days of Peleg," we need not hesitate a moment to assert, because the inspired penman has expressly told us so "Unto Eber," he says, "were born "two sons, and the name of one was Pe-"leg," (a word signifying division) "for "in his days was the earth divided." As to the *exact* point of time when this was effected, we can only say, that it was not *earlier* than a hundred, and certainly not *later* than two hundred years after the Flood Most commentators are indeed of opinion, that it was done precisely at the time of Peleg's birth, *i e.* at 101 years after the Flood, upon the supposition that names were heretofore, as they are

now, given at the birth But not to insist on the probability, that the name was given in anticipation of this great event, or that it might have been afterwards changed, on its actual occurrence, the expression "in his days" may perhaps induce us to believe that it was some years, perhaps fifty or a hundred later In this case, 150 or 200 years, will be given for the increase of mankind, and if, as we are told is an incontrovertible fact it is possible that the whole earth might be peopled and civilized as we now see it, within the space of *seven hundred* or *a thousand years*, we may easily conceive the land of Armenia, which was mountainous, and probably not very extensive, to have become, in the course of the period we have mentioned, so overstocked with inhabitants, as to render a separation necessary But however this might have been, *then, i e* "in the days of Peleg," we have no doubt, it was, that the earth was divided, and the reason why we have no doubt is, because the

sacred historian has positively said that it was so And—thirdly, that in the general, the several branches of the Patriarch's family, were obedient to the order of heaven, and did immediately retire to their respective territories, we have reason to believe, because Moses speaks of them in the 10th of Gen as having been actually settled in them, some time before the death of Noah, and because when Nimrod, and his wandering adherents, came into the plains of Shinar, which, we think could not have been 'till at least 50 years after the division of the earth we are speaking of, they found Ashur in possession of the country, and cities of no mean name, already built there

Thus then the truth of these three very important facts seems to be satisfactorily established, and if it be so, then of course it follows as a natural consequence, that the supposition that the formation of nations was subsequent to the dispersion from Babel, falls to the ground

But as we have presumed to oppose the

commonly received opinion on this subject, it becomes us to shew the farther reasons we have for objecting to it

We observe then first of all, that the history of the affair at Babel is given in the Chapter *following* that containing the account of the settling of the sons of Noah —hence therefore, if we believe the sacred writer to have observed order in his narrative, we may fairly infer it to have been a subsequent occurrence

But properly to understand who were the parties concerned in the affair at Babel, and what were the occasion and design of it, we must consult the account itself, as it stands in the Bible

"And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech —And it came "to pass as they journeyed from the east, "that they found a plain in the land of "Shinar, and they dwelt there --And they "said go to, let us build us a city, and a "tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we

" be scattered abroad upon the face of the " whole earth —And the Lord came down " to see the city and the tower which the " children of men builded.—And the Lord " said, Behold the people is one, and they " have all one language and this they " begin to do and now nothing will be " restrained from them which they have " imagined to do.—Go to, let us go down " and there confound their language that " they may not understand one another's " speech.—So the Lord scattered them " abroad from thence upon the face of all " the earth, and they left off to build the " city.' Gen xi, 1, &c

Now, because it is here said that " *all* " *the earth*" was of one language, and that the Lord did there, *i. e.* at Babel, confound the language, of *all the earth*, it is commonly supposed that at the time this was done, Babel was the chief settlement of mankind, or, at any rate, that the bulk of the population of the earth was then assembled there But, surely, it may be much doubted whether the words afford

any proof of the truth of this opinion, indeed, we feel persuaded that they do not, and that they relate to a small part only of mankind, *i e* to the Babylonians alone. Let the whole passage be read attentively, and without a previous bias, and the whole that we shall find it to amount to, will be this—that before any alteration had taken place in the language of mankind, a certain company of people came from the east, to the plains of Shinar, and dwelt there—that they built a city, and particularly a lofty Tower, which last, being undertaken with an evil intent, provoked God to frustrate their purpose, by confounding their language, and dispersing them abroad This is the substance of the whole that is said, and why all mankind should be thought to be concerned in the affair we know not, nor can imagine. To us it seems most evident, that the Babylonions *only* were the objects of the divine displeasure, that they alone suffered from it, and that for ought we

read to the contrary, we may believe the people of all other cities and countries to have remained at the time, wholly unaffected by it

But it may be said perhaps, that tho' the Babylonions were indeed the only people scattered, yet still the object of the dispersion was the peopling of the earth, and the laying of the foundation of nations That this was indeed the effect of it, in some instances, we do not deny, but that it was the great and principal *design* of it, we do not believe That which we conceive to have been the chief, if not the only, intention of Providence in dispersing the Babylonians, was, to punish them for their crimes, their rebellion, their presumption, and daring impiety. The founders of the city and kingdom of Babylon were Nimrod, and his roving companions the Cuthites, or Sons of Cush; and the general history of this people is, that they had resisted the divine appointment, in not going to the place which had been allotted to them for a settlement

In seizing upon the plains of Shinar they had also unjustly usurped the rights of Ashur, to whom those plains had been assigned,* And the object of their lofty tower was, undoubtedly, not so much to make them a name, as to defeat the purpose of heaven, of sending them to the country which had been destined for them. In short, they had gone, and were going, great and daring lengths in rebellion, rapine, and impiety, and "the Lord saw "that if left to themselves, nothing would be "restrained from them, which they should "imagine to do" He was pleased therefore to send his judgements upon them, and as one, and that a principal part of their crime was, the setting God at defiance, by resolving not to be removed from their favorite station, therefore he determined to scatter them, not only as the most effectual mode of counteracting their wicked purposes, but as the most appro-

* See Mede's Discourses, 49 at the end

priate punishment for their obstinate resistance to the divine will.

Such are the reasons we have to offer in proof of our opinion that nations had their origin within little more than a century after the Flood—and that the Dispersion from Babel had not in any degree, the *formation* of *Nations* for its *object*, but solely the punishment of the people of that wicked city, for their various provocations of the Almighty.

Note.—Tho' we venture to maintain that the object of the dispersion from Babel, was not the formation of Nations, and that in fact, few nations, if any, did originate from the scattered inhabitants of that country, yet do we not doubt in the least, but that the threatings of the Almighty were fully executed upon them. It should seem indeed, that they were so in the most wonderful manner, for it is said on good authority, that they wandered for ages, and that there was scarcely a country to which parties of them did

not resort in search of a place of settlement But still, it appears, we believe, that in most instances, the countries to which they fled for refuge, were occupied before their arrival This was certainly the case with respect to Egypt and Greece. These countries were already in the possession, the one, of the Misraim—the other, of the descendants of Javan, but being thinly peopled, the Babylonians were permitted to enter and settle From Egypt they were indeed, after a time, expelled, but in Greece, it is supposed, that they mixed with the old inhabitants, and became in process of time, united with them as one people

CHAPTER XII.

The Hindu Sacred Books.

THE Hindoos have a great variety of religious books, but those which are held most sacred by them are the Vedas, the Puranas, and the Ordinances of Menu. Of these, the Vedas are the most ancient, and had in the highest veneration, the doctrines they contain having been revealed, as the Hindoos believe, by Bráhma, the first and holiest of human beings. They consist of four distinct books, the first of which is called the *Rich*—the

second the *Yajust*—the third the *Saman*, and—the fourth the *At'harvan*. 'Till the time of Vyasa, they were preserved and handed down by oral tradition, by the successive Priests and ancient Sages of the country, but by him they were arranged in their present form and committed to writing Each Veda (for each of the four parts bears that title) is exceedingly voluminous, so that but few even of the Brahmins, who alone are authorised to read them, are acquainted with more than one, or, perhaps, a portion of one of them.

The contents of the Vedas are, as may be immagined, very various; they may however not improperly be classed under two heads; one of which may be considered as consisting of a collection of Prayers and Hymns—the other of a System of Doctrines and Precepts The *Yajust*, or second Veda, is written in prose—the first and third in metre, and the language and style of all the three are very obsolete, and difficult to be understood.

As to the At'harvan; some eminent oriental scholars are of opinion that this Veda is a more modern composition than the other three, and arguments are not wanting in support of this supposition. The At'harvan is however unquestionably, a very ancient compilation, and the probability is, that a certain portion of it at least, is as old, and as authentic, as either of the other three If the three first are more frequently mentioned, and held in greater esteem, than the fourth, the reason is probably to be sought, not in a supposed superiority of their origin and antiquity, but in the more important difference of their purport and uses. Prayers employed at solemn rites called *Yajnyas*, sublime hymns, and holy precepts and doctrines are contained in the three first Vedas but the At'harvan, tho' it abounds with prayers and hymns, contains none that are used at the religious ceremonies above alluded to, and hence no doubt, it is, that we find it less respected and noticed

The character which the Brahmins give of the Vedas is, that "they contain all "knowledge human, and divine" This, no doubt, is said in their usual style of exaggeration, and is far more than we shall feel disposed to give credit to. Still however, we may safely believe them to be most sublime compositions. "They "abound," (says the great Sir W Jones) "with noble speculations in Metaphysics, "and fine discourses on the Being and "Attributes of God." And Mr. Colebrooke, who, of all Europeans, is perhaps the most competent to speak of the contents of the Vedas, asserts that—"the real doc-"trine of the whole Indian Scriptures, is "the Unity of the Deity, in whom the "Universe is comprehended—and that "the worship of deified heroes, makes no "part of their system" These accounts certainly give to the Vedas a very interesting character, and we cannot but highly respect them, as well for the awful reverence with which they speak of the Supreme Being, as for the testimony they

bear to the true worship of Him alone, in the early ages of the world With such books in the hands of the Priests and religious teachers of the country, we might, one would think, naturally expect to find the worship of the Hindoos, if not perfectly pure, yet that it was free from gross idolatry. How melancholy then must be the reflection, that in no country do idolatry and the abominable rites of superstition, more prevail than in Hindustan If it be asked, how it is supposed that a people so enlightened, as the Hindoos appear to have been, should have become so corrupt in their notions of God, and of the worship due to him—the answer is obvious The Vedas, from which their purer ideas of God and religion were derived, have long since lost their authority and influence, and the worship they prescribe, is now almost wholly out of use. Add to which, that in the Upanishads, tracts have been introduced which countenance the worship of Rama and Chrishna, whilst

some of the Puranas are found expressly to sanction it Hence these Heroes, with the sanguinary Goddess Cáli, whose altars we are told, are continually blazing with bloody sacrifices, are now become the favorite objects of Hindu adoration, and the venerable institutions of the Veds, have yielded to the grossest idolatry that has ever debased the most uncivilized country

With respect to the Origin of the Vedas —we have but little to say, except what arises from conjecture It is true indeed, that the Hindoos tell us, that they were revealed to man by Bráhma, and preserved by tradition 'till they were arranged and committed to writing by Vyasa, but this only shews us their ignorance and credulity, and leaves us as much as ever in the dark as to their true origin. That they were the production of any other country than that of Hindustan, is perhaps, what we never should have suspected, had not reason been afforded us by the Bráhmins to suppose that this was the fact. They

assert positively, and invariably, that the Vedas were not originally made known to mankind in India, but that they were brought thither from the Sacred Isles in the West, thro' Egypt, and probably, thro' Persia. Indeed, they are said, in the Bhavishya-Purana, to "reside there in "human shapes, and to chaunt the praises "of Vishnu." By the sacred isles in the West, the British Islands and Iceland are meant. From this account, we are evidently to understand, that the Vedas did not there exist in *writing*, but were delivered or taught by *word* of mouth; and the truth is, that they are declared to have been handed down *orally* to Vyasa, who, the Hindu Books tell us, went to Sweeta-Dwipa, or the White Island, *i. e.* Britain, to be instructed in the knowledge of them, and on his return to the East, committed them to writing.

From these very remarkable circumstances, it will appear, we think, by no means unreasonable to conjecture, that

the doctrines contained in the Vedas, are the same as those which were taught by the ancient Druids, and that the knowledge they convey, was obtained from them The Druids, according to Cæsar, were well informed in many branches of science—for "they were acquainted," he says, "with the dimensions of the Earth, "and the movements of the Stars, and "instructed the youth, who in great num-"bers resorted to them, in the nature of "things, and in the Being and Power of "the immortal Gods." He tells us, too, that they always delivered their instructions *orally*, and never allowed them to be recorded in writing. And as the White Island, Albion or Britain, was every where considered as the chief seat and fountain of Druidical learning, so all, it is said by Cæsar, who wished to become accurately acquainted with their disciplme and sacred mysteries, repaired thither for instruction So that from this very remarkable agreement of circumstances, added to the resemblance, which Pliny mentions as ob-

servable, between the religious rites and practices of the Persians, and those of the Druids in Britain,* and the correct Geographical knowledge which it appears from their ancient books, the Hindoos certainly had, in very remote times, of the British Islands, the conjecture, that the doctrines of the Vedas are the same as were those of the Druids, and that (as the Hindoos declare was the fact) they really might have obtained their knowledge of them from hence, may not seem so incredible, as at first mentioning may appear to be.†

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* See Asiatic Researches, vol ii, p 76

† The remarkable resemblance between the religious notions, rites, customs and practices of the Druids in Britain, and those of the Brahmins in Hindustan, both ancient and modern, is admitted by all who have had opportunities of observing and comparing them. The only question is—which of the two are to be considered as the founders of the system.

Maurice attributes it to the invention of the Brahmins and supposes that it had its origin in Hindustan, and that the Druids obtained their knowledge of it by communications from thence. But the Hindoos themselves are of a directly contrary opinion and it is on this ground, that we have ventured to differ from him. They maintain that they were taught it, by Priests from Britain and the

With respect to the *Age* of the Vedas—as it is admitted by all the learned Hindoos that they were arranged and compiled by Vyasa, and were not known in Hindustan in their present form, before his time, their age has been ascertained with a considerable degree of accuracy and certainty. Vyasa was the son of Parasara, a famous Astronomer whose works are still in being. In these works a particular astronomical observation is recorded, from which it is calculated, that he must have lived about 1390 years before the birth of Christ. Supposing therefore that his son Vyasa compiled the Vedas 40 years after this time, their greatest age will now be 3170 years, which is not more than one

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Brahmins descended from those Priests, are still a distinct body from the others, and look upon themselves as a superior order. They live principally in the Province of South Bahar, anciently called Magadha, from Maga, the chief of the Priests, who came from Britain and settled there.

If these circumstances are considered, it will, we think, be admitted, that we stand on safe ground, when we claim the honor of the invention—if any honor it be—for the Druids.

hundred years short of the age of the writings of Moses who died, in the year before Christ 1451

Of the authenticity of the Vedas we have but little occasion to speak as no Asiatic Scholar, of any repute, appears ever to have called it in question, and the bare assertion of any other person is worthy of but little notice It is true, that fabricated compositions in Sanscrit have been attempted to be imposed upon some of our countrymen, and it is possible that some of these may have passed without detection, but that the Vedas are of this description, is what no one, competent to judge, will believe for a moment. Nay, that they should be so, seems to be a thing impossible, since— no skill in the nefa-
" rious arts of forgery and falsification
" could be equal to the arduous task of
" fabricating large works, like the Vedas,
" to agree with the very numerous cita-
" tions pervading thousands of volumes,
" composed on diverse subjects, and in
" very different ages, and dispersed thro'

"the various nations of Hindoos inha-
"biting Hindustan and the Dekhin"
This is the persuasion of Mr Colebrooke and hence he hesitates not to pronounce most decidedly, that "the greatest part of "the books received by the learned among "the Hindoos will be found genuine, and "that the Vedas will appear to be un-"doubtedly of this description"
See Asiatic Researches, v. viii, p. 131, 488

The Puranas

THE Books which stand highest in the estimation of the Hindoos, after the Vedas, are the Puranas These books which are Eighteen in number, are written in the Sanscrit language, and "were com-"posed, it is said, for the instruction and "entertainment of mankind in general." "They comprise," says Sir W Jones, "a "series of Mythological Histories in blank "verse, from the Creation to the sup "posed incarnation of Buddah" This account is, no doubt, correct so far as it

goes, but it is particularly worthy of our farther notice, that these histories, tho' often dressed up in allegorical language, are evidently narratives of early events, in many instances, similar to those recorded by Moses Thus, we have an account of the Sacrifice made by the pious Dacsha, and of his being slain by his envious brother Cardameswara—by which it is obvious that the slaying of Abel by his brother Cain, is intended. We also find the translation of Enoch, under the name of Drhuva, mentioned, with many other instances of Patriarchal History, both before and after the Flood, similar in many respects to those related by Moses. But the most remarkable of these Histories is that perhaps, which records the occurrence of the Deluge in the time of Noah The account is given in the first, or Matsya Purana, and is undoubtedly a figurative one It proves however beyond a doubt, that a primeval tradition of this event has existed in Hindustan, probably from the days of Noah, and is in

this view of it, a very interesting and important discovery, as it confirms the truth of the Scripture History in this instance, and affords an additional reason for our giving the more ready credit to all the other accounts recorded in it. Nor are the Puranas worthy of notice only for the portions of ancient history they contain, the geographical description they give, not only of India and the northern parts of Asia, but of the countries bordering on the Nile, and still more particularly, of the Sacred Isles in the West, are equally extraordinary and deserving of attention.* These descriptions, especially that of the White Island or Britain, are in many respects very circumstantial and accurate. This Island is said to be three-peaked or triangular, and appears to have been then divided into three kingdoms. Ireland is

* Each Purana contains a Chapter on Geography usually entitled 'Bhuvana darsa,' or the Mirror of Regions. The names of ancient nations which the Hindus have retained, attest the truth of their traditions, as the Pehleva, the Sacæ (Saxons) and more recently, the Huma."

See Edinburgh Review, May, 1820.

also well described It is called Suvarná-Dwipa, or the Island of Gold, Ireland having in early times been famous for its Gold-mines. That the Hindoos should have been, in times so remote, so accurately acquainted with these Islands, as from these accounts it appears they certainly were, must undoubtedly seem strange, but if it be true, as the Puranas and other Hindu books declare was the fact, that the Vedas were conveyed from the Sacred Isles in the West, thro' Egypt to Hindustan, and this by Priests of the White Island *i. e* of Britain, our wonder at their knowledge of these distant countries will of course cease immediately.

Among the Hindoos it is generally supposed that the Puranas were composed by Vyasa, which supposition if true, would make them equal in antiquity to the Vedas, but there are many reasons for believing them to be much mistaken in this respect It is, indeed not improbable that Vyasa might have compiled some few of them— but that he should have written *all*

of them is impossible, since persons are mentioned in several of them, who are confessedly known to have lived many centuries after the death of Vyasa. The greatest age that can be allowed to any of the Puranas, is 2400 years, which supposes them to have been written 600 years before the Christian Æra, (see preface to the Institutes of Menu), but it may be much doubted whether many of them have good claims to so great antiquity Indeed, if the opinion of Wilford be well founded, they are all modern compilations from very old materials, which are now no longer to be found But, by *modern* compilations, it is supposed, of course, that he means *modern,* when compared with the Vedas—the Institutes of Menu, and some few others of the Hindu books.

The Institutes or Ordinances of Menu

THIS Book we are told by Sir W Jones, who translated and published it, contains

a "system of duties, religious and civil, and of law in all its branches, which the Hindoos firmly believe to have been promulgated in the beginning of time, by Menu, Son or Grandson of Bramah; or, in plain language, the First of Created Beings, and not the oldest only, but the holiest of Legislators. It possesses also abundance of curious matter, extremely interesting both to speculative Lawyers and Antiquaries, with many beauties which need not be pointed out, and with many blemishes which cannot be justified or palliated. Nevertheless, a spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work. The style of it has a certain austere Majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe. The sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions, even to Kings, are truly noble, and the

" many Panegyrics on the Gáyatrì, the
" Mother, as it is called, of the Vèda,
" prove the Author to have adored—not
" the visible material Sun," but—" that
" divine and incomparably greater Light
" which (to use the words of the most
venerable text in the Indian Scripture)
" illumines all, delights all, from which
" all proceed, to which all must return,
" and which alone can irradiate our
" intellects."

The ancient history and chronology of the Hindoos says Sir W. Jones, are so clouded with fables and allegories, that we are not able to ascertain precisely, the time when this book was composed, but we have evidence, he observes, partly extrinsic, and partly internal, that it is really one of the oldest compositions existing. He then by a very satisfactory calculation and mode of reasoning, proceeds to shew, that the age of the Institutes may be carried as far back as to the ninehundredth year before the birth of Christ.

To this account I have only to add

that Vyasa has decided, that "the Veda, "with its Angas," meaning the Six Compositions deduced from it, "the Puràṇas "or sacred histories, and the Code of "Menu, are works of supreme authority, "which ought never to be shaken by arguments merely human"

See Preface to Institutes of Menu

CHAPTER XIII.

The Sanscrit Language

THE Language in which all the Hindu Sacred Books are written, is the Sanscrit. This language, 'till of late years, was understood only by the learned Brahmins, it is now, however, well known to Europeans, many of whom are as complete masters of it, as any of the Bràhmins, and it is obviously by means of this acquisition, that our learned Countrymen have

been enabled to make such useful and interesting discoveries in Indian literature

Sir W Jones, who, it is acknowledged by all, had attained to a very correct and even critical knowledge of the Sanscrit, tells us, that it is a language of a " wonderful structure, more perfect than the " Greek, more copious than the Latin, " and more exquisitely refined than " either; yet bearing to both of them a " stronger affinity both in the roots of " Verbs, and in the forms of Grammar, " than could possibly have been produced " by accident, so strong indeed, that no " Philologer could examine them all three, " without believing them to have sprung " from some common source, which, per- " haps, no longer exists." There is a similar reason, tho' not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and the Celtic had the same origin with the Sanscrit,* and the old Persian might be

* " The Sanscrit—with which the ancient language " of Ireland has certainly an affinity "

See Memoirs of Sir W Jones, p. 370.

added to the same family, &c As no man was better qualified to give a character of the language, than this eminent Linguist, we may, no doubt, safely depend on the account which he has given of it, especially when we find all the other learned men in the East, as well Europeans as Asiatics, bearing the same testimony to its perfection and excellence

As to its origin, it is remarkable, that none of the learned Brahmins are able to furnish any other account of it, than that it had not its origin in India,* but came with the light of Revelation, from the West Sir W. Jones however has given it as his opinion, that it was formed out of some ancient *unpolished idiom*,† and this idiom, it is evident from what he says in another place he supposes to have been the language of the first Monarchy that was established in Persia after the Flood; by which he must, of course, mean that of

* See Asiatic Researches, vol 1, p 422

† See Asiatic Researches as above

the ancient Chaldeans.* We cannot however but be induced to think, both from its name, and the exquisite arrangement of its parts, which that name implies, and also from the circumstance, that no tradition whatever has been handed down as to the country in which it was first known and had in use—that it never was the language of the people in *general*, of any particular nation or country, but was invented by learned and scientific men for the purpose of preserving in it the knowledge of the doctrines and mysteries of religion, and of keeping them secret from the vulgar †

But whatever be the place of its origin, or whatever the time and purpose of its formation, we have good reason for believing that it was not the primeval lan-

* See Asiatic Researches, vol ii p 64.

† We are the more confirmed in this opinion from the circumstance, that where-ever we find any reason for supposing the ancient Hindu religion to have prevailed, as undoubtedly it once did in most parts of Europe, there we still discover evident remains of the Sanscrit language

guage of Hindustan, nor was formed from any idiom that was ever in use in that country * Indeed, it seems by no means unreasonable to be believed, that it was not even known in India† 'till it was brought thither, about a thousand or twelve hundred years A.C. with the religion of the Brahmins. That we are not in error in saying that it was not formed from any Indian idiom will appear from hence, that in the Hindì,‡ which is sup-

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* "India is by no means to be considered as the pri-"mitive and original country of the Sanscrit language, "tho' it flourishes there now exclusively"

See Asiatic Researches, vol ii, p 106.

† "The language of the aborigines of India, ex-"tending from the Bay of Bengal to Bombay, and in-"habiting the mountainous tracts in the interior parts, "has no affinity whatever with the Sanscrit, or any of its "dialects"

See Asiatic Researches, vol xi, 106.

‡ Mr. Colebrooke is of opinion, that the Sanscrit language was the parent of the Hindi and other provincial dialects, and that it was once the universal language of the whole Peninsula of India but tho' he supports his conjecture with much ingenuity, we can by no means consider his arguments sufficiently decisive to justify a preference of his opinion to that of Mr. Wilford which is here adopted

posed to be the primitive language of the Country, not a single Sanscrit word is to be found, except it be a few names of things that have been evidently introduced by means of trade and commerce Considering that this is now the only country in which the Sanscrit language is known to be in use, the foregoing assertion cannot but be thought extraordinary It is, however, not more surprising than true—as both Sir W. Jones, and the learned and ingenious Captain Wilford, have possitively assured us—so that the tradition prevailing among the Brahmins, that the Sanscrit had not its rise in Hindustan, may certainly be considered as well-founded But here again, it is not less remarkable than true, that at the time the Hindī has no traces of the Sanscrit in it, there is scarcely any other language or dialect, whether ancient or modern, in either quarter of the Globe, except it be the interior of Africa, but what abounds with

Sanscrit words * If we may believe Wilford, who seems to have spared neither time nor pains to inform himself on this subject, and who consequently must be considered as competent to speak decidedly upon it, the Sanscrit language pervades all the languages, ancient and modern, not only of Ethiopia, Arabia, and Egypt, of Persia, Turan, Ava and Siam, but those of the Northern parts of Africa, and of all Europe as far as Iceland inclusively † Nay, he assures us, that even in

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* "You would be astonished (says Sir W Jones, in a Letter to T Caldicott, Esq) at the resemblance be-"tween that language," i. e the Sanscrit, "and both 'Greek and Latin"

See Memoirs, p 372

† "The Sanscrit pervades all the languages, both an-"cient and modern, of Europe, in a surprising degree'

See Asiatic Researches, vol xi, p 106

Many very remarkable Analogies between the Latin, Greek and Sanscrit languages have been lately pointed out in a work by Franz Bopp, published at Frankfort, which seem' (says the Edinburgh Reviewer, May, 1820) "much more than sufficient to demonstrate that 'the internal structure of the Greek Latin, and Sanscrit "tongues is regulated on the same principles, and cast in 'the same mould"

the dialects of Mexico, of Brasil, and of the Caribbean Islands, a great many Sanscrit words are to be found, and that out of eighteen words, the whole that are given by Barrow in his Vocabulary of the Hottentot language, three are pure Sanscrit. If the countries here mentioned as those in which traces of the Sanscrit language are to be found, be viewed on a map, they will be seen to form a belt from the Easternmost parts of Asia, to the extremities of the west, and of Europe, and tending from the South-east towards the North-west. Out of this belt, no traces of the Sanscrit are to be met with.

If it be asked, what conclusion we draw relative to the origin of the Sanscrit, or rather, the *place* of its origin, from these discoveries of its extensive mixture with other languages, we answer, that we infer from them—that what Sir W. Jones has said relative to the language of the first Persian or old Chaldean Monarchy—viz. "that it was the Mother of the Sanscrit," is true.

It is pretty certain that the first Monarchy that was formed by the descendants of Noah after the Flood, was established in Persia; and that it was by emigrations from thence, that the countries East and West of it, were peopled and formed into kingdoms Now, as it is beyond a doubt, certain, that these emigrants would carry the language of their original and native country with them—so we cannot but believe that, tho' after a time they would lose their original language, and acquire others peculiar to themselves, yet that many, very many simple words of that language, particularly the names of things in common use, and of those most obvious to the senses, would for ages be retained among them Hence therefore we are led to conclude, that as it is certain that the several nations, in which traces of the Sanscrit language are now found, were Colonies from Persia, so the Language they carried with them, was the Sanscrit, or the rude origi-

nal idiom out of which it was formed; and hence, consequently, that the Sanscrit had its origin in Persia, tho' the time when it attained its present scientific arrangement and exquisite refinement is, and probably will now for ever remain, utterly unknown

The Characters in which the Sanscrit language is written, are the Nágarí, or as they are sometimes called, Deva-nágarí, the word Deva being prefixed to signify, that they were taught by the Divinity, who, it is said, prescribed the order of them by a voice from heaven These letters, with some variation, are now in use in more than twenty states and kingdoms, in, and bordering on, Hindustan. Tho' certainly not so ancient as the old square Chaldaic Characters, in which most Hebrew books are written, yet is it supposed that they were both derived from the same prototype, and Sir William Jones is of opinion that the Phenician from which the Greek and Roman Alphabets were formed, by various changes and inversions, had a similar origin

CHAPTER XIV

The Brahmins, and the Antiquity of their Religion

THE Brahmins themselves acknowledge that they were not originally Natives of Hindustan. On the contrary they say, that they came from the West, and that they entered Hindustan thro' the pass of Haridwar, and settled at first at Canoge. In another account, viz. that of Father Marco, we are told that they came from Egypt, and took up their abode at Tirút Whilst Sir W Jones

supposes, that they emigrated from Persia, having been driven from thence by the persecutions of Cayumersh, who reigned there about 890 years before the birth of Christ. But the most circumstantial account, tho' perhaps the one requiring the greatest degree of faith in order to its being credited, is that which Wilford has given us from the Bhavishyu Purana. It is as follows "Samba the Son of Chrish-
"na, wishing to understand the true
"manner of worshiping the Sun, was di-
"rected by him (the Sun) to send to Saca-
"dwipa, or the White Island, for Maga
"to instruct him He mounted Garuda
"and went thither, and finding him wor-
"shiping the Sun, he requested him to
"follow him. Maga, which it appears
"was the distinguishing name of one of
"the four tribes abounding in meritorious
"deeds, and residing in Saca-dwipa, im-
"mediately complied, saying, there are
"Eighteen families descended from me,
"all deeply skilled in the knowledge of
"the Vedas and acquainted with all reli-

" gious rites, and we are ready to accom-
" pany you So saying, they were all
" conveyed by Garuda to Samba, (a town
" built by the Sage of that name) where
" they consecrated the Statue of the Sun,
" and established the ceremonies of his
" worship" Samba, to reward their services, gave them the town so named after him bestowed on them great riches and established them there The town of Samba is near the Chinab It is now but little known, tho' said to be the sthan " or place of the Sun, and incapable of " decay." Whether any and what credit will generally be given to this apparently fabulous history, we cannot undertake to say But, on the whole, there seem to be reasons for believing that it has some truth in it and they are these—first, from the very great veneration which it appears the ancient Hindoos had for Saca-dwipa or the White Island—secondly, from the strong resemblance there was between the religious notions and practices of the

Hindoos, and those of the Druids in Sacadwipa—and lastly, from the circumstance that a very considerable tribe of Brahmins are at this time to be found in India, who are called Magas, as they themselves say, from *Maga* the head of the Brahminical families, who were sent for by Samba, and that the Country in which they settled, was called after them, *Magadha*.

Supposing this to have been the time of the Brahmins coming first into Hindustan, their arrival may be fixed to have been about 1300 years before Christ But as there are at this day, several different sects of Brahmins in India—some following the worship of Vishnu, and others that of Siva—some professing a veneration for the Sun and for fire, whilst others entertain little or no respect for either of them, the probability is—that a variety of tribes of Brahmins have at different times emigrated, some perhaps from Egypt, and others from Persia and settled in Hindustan, tho' the time when they severally came there, can now perhaps be never dis-

covered with any tolerable degree of accuracy or certainty.*

As to the question—which of the two religions, that of the Brahmins, or that of the Buddahists, is the most ancient—as the Learned in India, cannot come to an agreement on this point, it is not likely that we, who have only their arguments to guide us in forming our judgment, should be more successful in deciding it.

Sir W Jones, in his Discourse on the Persians, lays it down almost as a certainty, that "the first corruption of the purest "and oldest religion in the world, was "the System of Indian Theology invented "by the Brahmans, and now prevalent in "these territories"

See Asiatic Researches, vol ii, p. 59.

From this passage we must of course infer, that he believed the Brahminical

* Sir W Jones tells us that he is firmly convinced that the religion of the Brahmins prevailed in Persia before the accession of Cayumers Asiatic Researches, v ii, p 61

Superstition to be the oldest—and this indeed is the opinion which he generally maintains. For tho' he admits that the same superstition prevailed in Egypt and Persia, and that Brahminical Priests might at different times have come from thence into India, yet he does not allow that Brahminism was brought thither from these countries On the contrary, he supposes the religion of all the three kingdoms to have had a common origin, and been contemporary.

But this opinion of the superior antiquity of the Brahminical Religion, is far from being generally received in Hindustan. Mr Chambers, Dr. F Buchanan, and others very decidedly oppose it, and seem to assign many weighty reasons for the decision they have come to They maintain that the religion, or worship of Buddah extended all over Hindustan from the earliest times, (A R i, 166.) and that the religion of the Brahmins was introduced either from Egypt or Persia, about 250 years before the Christian Æra A

certain Kushup, they say, brought the Brahmins to inhabit the country of Cashmere about this time—that by degrees they gained the ascendancy over the Buddahists, and destroyed their temples, and that by the year 900 of our æra, they had entirely supplanted them in the Decan. The authority on which these assertions are made is to be found in Mr Chambers's account of the Ruins at Mavalipuram, and Dr Buchanan's Essay on the Religion of the Burmas On the whole, we cannot but think that the religion of Buddah is the more ancient, at least, in certain parts of Hindustan, and our reasons for so thinking are the following first, because the time when Buddah lived, has not been ascertained with any degree of correctness or certainty—secondly, because no one presumes to fix the precise time when his worship was first introduced or set up in India—thirdly, from the still remaining evidences of the general prevalence of his worship in various parts of India, consisting of Images

and Ruins of Temples, which are acknowledged to have been those of Buddah—fourthly, from its present very extensive prevalence, viz over the kingdoms of Siam and Ava, over the Burma empire and that of China, over Thibet, Tonkin, Japan and Ceylon—and lastly, because Buddah is spoken of in the Vedas, and acknowledged even by the most orthodox Brahmins to have been one of their divine Avatars, or Incarnations of Vishnu.

But tho' the religion of Buddah be admitted to be the oldest of the two, there is yet reason for believing that he was not a native of Hindustan, but an African The circumstance however which has given rise to this supposition is merely this, that all the Images that have been found of him, represent him as having had *curled* or *woolly* hair, similar to that of an Ethiopian

Sir W Jones says, he was probably a Warrior or Law-giver. and thinks he might have been the same person as Sesac (one of Buddah's names being Sacya,)

and that he came from Ethiopia His opinion is, that he was rather a Benefactor, than a Destroyer of mankind, and the mild spirit of his religion, which seems to breath benevolence both to man and beast, certainly affords a good foundation for this conjecture He does not allow the taking away of life from any creature whatsoever, and condemns the Vedas for permitting the slaughter of Cattle even for sacrifice. On his own Altars, only fruits and flowers are suffered to be offered

CHAPTER XV.

The Doctrines and Worship of the Brahmins.

IT seems clearly to appear, that the learned Brahmins, and other intelligent men among the Hindoos, acknowledge only *One* Supreme Being whom they denominate *Bráhme*, or the *Great-One*, in the neuter gender. Of this Supreme Being, whom they style "the Invisible, Eter-"nal and Self-existing Cause—the Prin-"ciple of Truth, and the Spirit of Wis-

"dom," they have no image, considering his essence infinitely removed beyond the comprehension of any mind but his own, and that he cannot be represented under any form or figure whatsoever.

See Asiatic Researches, v. 1, p. 242, 245

To this Supreme Being no worship of any kind is ever paid *directly* But it seems to be a matter of certainty, that the images which are found in the Hindu temples, were for the most part, intended, at first, to represent his several Attributes

Thus, under the character of *Bráhma*, the Brahmins understand the divine Power as exerted in *Creating* Under that of *Vishnu*, they intend to represent the same power as exercised in *Preserving* And by *Siva*, they mean the same divine power when employed in *Destroying* or *changing the forms* of things

But the manner in which the Hindu writers speak of these three persons or powers, appears to be very confused, and

it is believed that regard is not always had to their peculiar characters

Brahma is sometimes represented as the *Supreme God*, as when he is said to be the "Eternal, Self-existing Cause, whom all "creatures celebrate"

Vishnu is said to be the Divine Spirit, and is also called *Náráyana*, from *Nárá-Water*, and *Ayana Moving*, because his first moving, or operation, was in the creation of water.

Siva has a great variety of names, applied to him, as it is conceived, according to the different occasions on which he is supposed to exercise his power

It may not perhaps be improper here to observe, now that we are speaking of the triplex Divinity of the Hindoos, that one or two of the Christian Missionaries who have been sent to India for the conversion of the Heathen, have judged so ill as to assert, that 'the Hindoos are, "even now, almost Christians, because "their Brahmá, Vishnu, and Siva, are no

"other than the Christian Trinity—a sentence in which (says Sir W Jones) it can only be doubted, whether ignorance, folly, or impiety predominates. The three Powers, *Creative, Preservative*, and *Destructive*, which the Hindoos express by the triliteral word O'm, were grossly ascribed by the first idolaters, to the *heat, light*, and *flame* of their mistaken divinity, the Sun; and their wiser successors in the East, who perceived that the sun was only a created thing, applied those powers to its Creator But the Indian Triad, and that of Plato, which he calls the Supreme Good, the Reason, and the Soul, are infinitely removed from the holiness and sublimity of the doctrine, which pious Christians have deduced from texts in the holy Gospels The tenet of our church cannot therefore, without profaneness, be compared with that of the Hindoos, which has only an apparent resemblance to it, but a very different meaning." Asiatic Researches, iii

An error of a somewhat similar nature, has also been fallen into by Mr Wilford, who has inconsiderately ventured to tell us, that the Twice-born Hindoo is regenerated by the *Gáyatri,* in the *same* manner as we Christians are born again of the Spirit and Water, and that the mysterious name of the Holy Trinity is really our Gáyatrí. We are persuaded that Mr W who appears to be a true Christian, as well as a first-rate Scholar, meant not to disparage any doctrine of Christianity—but it is obvious to remark, that such comparisons are a great and serious disparagement—the regeneration of a Christian believer by the Holy Spirit of God, being an operation widely different, both as to the cause and the effect of it, from any consequence that can possibly ensue from the use of the mysterious words of the Gáyatrí.

With respect to the religious worship of the Hindoos—it has been observed already, that they pay no divine homage to

the Supreme Being, the Creator and Lord of all things, and this statement is undoubtedly true Indeed, from certain very absurd, as well as singular notions they entertain, *they think it wrong* to worship him Some modern authors, it is true, have gone so far as to represent the worship of the Brahmins as of a very superior cast, as pure, sublime, and spiritual, and as wholly free from idolatry; but this is a picture drawn not from the life, but from the fancy, and the Hindoos themselves deny its likeness. For, if you ask them (says Wilford) "whether "they worship Idols, they will immedi-"ately, and without the least hesitation, "answer, 'Yes, we do worship Idols.' "On the other hand—ask them, whether "learned or unlearned, 'Do you worship "the Supreme Being, Parameswara? Do "you pray to him? Do you offer sacri-"fices to him?' they will answer imme-"diately, 'No, never.'" But certainly you meditate on his perfections and attributes, and worship him *mentally*? "No"

What is then that silent devotion which you sometimes perform? The answer which an intelligent Hindoo will return to this question will probably be as follows "When I perform the Puja in "honor of some of the Gods, I seat my-"self on the ground with my legs crossed, "like those who perform Tapasya. Then "with my eyes closed and raised to hea-"ven, my hands moderately open, close "to each other, and a little elevated, I "compose my mind and thoughts, and "without moving the tongue or using "any of the organs of speech, I say in-"wardly, I am Brahme, or the Supreme "Being. Now it is forbidden (he will "add) to adore the Supreme Being, to "offer prayers and sacrifices to him, for "this would be *worshiping ourselves*. But "we may worship and adore collateral "Emanations from him Nay, we may "worship even mere mortals, and the "worship of Images is recommended, "when, after consecration, the Deity has

" been called down and forced into them " with powerful spells.*

Such is the absurd and deplorable reasoning of the Hindoos, even of the learned and their practice is altogether of a piece with it Accordingly, we find them observing certain festivals and rites in honor of their several Idol Divinities, particularly Rama, Chrishna, and Cali, but to have no times or services for the worship of the Supreme Being, the Creator and Preserver of the Universe.

As to their private devotions, these seem to consist chiefly in addresses to the Sun, to Water, and to different Gods or Goddesses, as may suit the worshipers' fancy or occasion Ablutions must also be daily practised, and if these be performed in the Ganges, the more meritorious and efficacious it is supposed they will prove

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* See Asiatic Researches, vol ii, 126

CHAPTER XVI.

The Avatars or Incarnations of Vishnu.

THE Hindoos are of opinion that Vishnu, the Divine Spirit, has frequently, in his capacity of Preserver, descended from heaven, and manifested himself to mankind, sometimes, for their preservation, at others, for their punishment, and at others, for their instruction These manifestations are sometimes called the Incarnations of Vishnu—of which it is supposed that there have been *Nine* already, and

that there is yet *one* to come Of the Six first, we only know that *three* are thought to relate to the Deluge, and *two* to certain interpositions of Providence for the punishment of Impiety, and the humiliation of the Proud Of Rama the 7th, we are told that he was the Son of Cush, the Grand-son of Noah, and that he is the same person whose adventures in his war with Ravan, King of Lanca or Ceylon, make the subject of the famous Epic Poem called the Ramayan, of which Valmic, the first and greatest of the Hindoo Poets, was the Author.

The Eighth Avatar was Chrishna. He is described as a youth of great beauty and gallantry, is generally represented splendidly decorated with garlands, and continues to this day, the favorite God of the Hindoo Ladies When he attained to Manhood, he destroyed his cruel enemy, Cansa, and took under his protection the persecuted king Yudhisht'er, whose fortunes in his wars with his oppressors, the Curus and their tyranical Chief, form the

subject of the second renowned Epic Poem of the Hindoos, called the Mahábárat, written by Vyasa Having completely subdued the Curus, and restored the oppressed king to his rights, Chrishna left the earth, and returned to his heavenly residence. The circumstances of his story which are recounted in the Bagavat, a famous Poem written by Vyasa, are very extraordinary. They seem, in many instances, to agree with the character given by the Evangelical Prophet of our Saviour, and with the circumstances of his life and conduct, and yet it is certain that he lived not less than thirteen hundred years before our Lord's nativity To account for such coincidences is certainly not easy, but the probability is, that some predictions relative to the character and behaviour of the Messiah, had from the earliest age, prevailed in the world, and that the Hindoos applied these to their favorite Deity, Chrishna, in the same manner as the Greeks referred them to their Apollo.

The ninth or last Avater that has ap-

peared, was Buddah, whose character we shall find by no means less remarkable than his predecessor It is said that his Coming was foretold a thousand years before he appeared, and tho' his religion be very materially different from that of the Brahmins, both as to its principles and practices, yet they acknowledge him to have been a divine person, and speak of him with great veneration, at the same time that they pronounce his followers to be Atheists, and shew a most malignant spirit towards them, the reason of which probably is because they, like the founder of their faith, censure the Vedas for ordaining the sacrifice of Cattle

The character given of Buddah is certainly a very amiable one He is called the Benevolent and Tender-hearted, and his religion breathes a spirit of love and kindness towards every creature that hath life, whether human or brute, rational or irrational

In his capacity of Avatar, *i. e.* of Vishnu, or the divine Spirit in a human shape,

he is addressed by his worshipers as—"the Eternal One—the Lord of the Universe—and as God in the form of the "God of Mercy." He is also said to be "the Purifier of the Sinful—the Destroyer "of the Evil Spirit Kesee—the Bestower "of Salvation—and he by whom the sins "of the Cali Yug are overcome and "absolved."

The Buddahists, it appears, are not only obliged to pray, like the Brahmins, three times a-day privately in their houses, but they have also periodical seasons for public worship in their Temples, viz. on the *four first days of the change of the moon* in every month, but they do not observe these days as days of rest, or as in any other way to be kept holy, than by attending at the temples as above mentioned. On all these occasions their devotions are addressed to Buddah as their Saviour.

As to the Age in which Buddah lived, and the origin of his religion, these are

points at present much in dispute among the learned in India, and the probability is, that they will not soon or easily be decided. The first person of note, of this name, whom we read of was Buddah, who married Ahalya or Ila, the daughter of Noah, but of him we know nothing, except that he lived about two thousand years before the birth of Christ—that he is supposed to be the Mercury of the Greeks, and the Woden of the Goths—and the person after whom the fourth day of the week is named by the Hindoos.

The Buddah who is next mentioned, is the same as is admitted by the Brahmins to have been their Ninth Avatar, and who lived, according to their account, about 200 years after Chrishna, and 1200 before the time of Christ, and was born in a forest near Gaya.*

* Most Europeans are decidedly of opinion, that Buddah was not a native of India. His images, which are of a monstrous size, and generally represent him sitting, have not the least cast of the features and character of an Hindoo. A. R. iii, 108. On the contrary, his curly hair and general appearance bespeak him to have been an African.

Of the Buddah who is worshiped by the Burmas, we are told, that he is supposed by his Priests in that country, to have lived not more than 600 years before the Christian Æra

Supposing these to be three distinct persons, and it is generally believed there were more than one eminent person of the name—the question is, which of them is to be considered as the Founder of the religion of Buddah? To answer this question in a satisfactory manner, we have no means It must however be admitted, that the religion is most ancient, and that the reasons assigned by many eminent scholars why it should be considered as the oldest in Hindustan, are such as cannot easily be refuted On the whole, we are inclined to think, that if there really was such a person as Buddah who married the daughter of Noah, he was the Author of Buddahism, and our reason for so thinking are these--first, because it was not unusual for mankind in the earliest ages of

the world, to deify their Ancestors, especially such as were considered as the founders and benefactors of their families, as the first Buddah may be supposed to have been—and secondly because Buddah is confessed by the Brahmins to be mentioned in the Vedas, which he could not have been, had he not lived before they were compiled, which was not the case of any but of the first mentioned Buddah

We are aware that in reply to this, it may be said, that Buddah condemns the Vedas, and therefore he must have lived after they were written But this may well be supposed to be the act of his followers, rather than of Buddah himself, or it might have been the act of Buddah the Avatar, who certainly lived long after the Vedas were compiled, and is sometimes said to have been the reformer of them.

The three great instances in which the religion of Buddah differs in practice from that of the Brahmins, are, that the former does not allow the sacrifice of any thing

living, and that it requires no respect to be had to the Sun or to Fire, or to the Waters of the Ganges, which, on the contrary, the Brahmins hold most sacred

To a Christian, who knows that from the earliest age of the world, a Promise was made of a Saviour from Heaven, whose coming should be a blessing to all nations, the thought cannot but occur, that this notion of the Hindoos of the "Incarnation of the Deity," for such they declare the Avatars to be, must in all probability have arisen from the fore-mentioned Promise—which, it may be supposed, was remembered and handed down among them, as it appears to have been among most other nations.

Hitherto, we have met with no evidence whatever, from which it may be justly inferred, that the ancient Hindoos were at all acquainted with the writings of Moses or those of the Jewish Prophets, but they have always had, and still have, a persuasion among them, of a Saviour

who should come from the West, who should renovate the world, and be a Prince of Peace and Justice, and it is said that the Vedas and Puranas contain predictions of the coming of such a person There can be little room to doubt, then, that this notion of the Incarnation of the Deity, arose from the promise of God to Adam, which had been transmitted from generation to generation among them, and which, however mysterious it might have appeared, was so far at least intelligible, as to give them reason to believe, that the expected Saviour would be "God manifest in the flesh"

Note—It has been said above, that the expectation of a Saviour was handed down among *most nations* There cannot, we think, be a doubt but that we might have said with equal truth, that traces of it are to be found among them *all* The Mexicans, it should seem, from what Robertson says in his History of America, vol ii p 338, 8vo entertained some expectation

of this kind And the same may be said, with still more truth, of the South-Sea Islanders, who, it can scarcely be doubted, believed Captain Cooke to be the person they looked for, not only from the religious honors they paid to him, and which he most injudiciously, not to say, culpably, received—but from the sentiments they expressed of him, and the Name or Title they gave to him, which, tho' our people could never understand the precise meaning of it, the Natives, or rather the Priests, applied to some invisible Being, who, they said, lived in the Heavens."

See Cooke's Voyages.

CHAPTER XVII

Of the Philosophy of the Ancient Hindoos

THE Philosophical tenets of the ancient Hindoos are of a very exalted kind, and such as cannot but excite our admiration at their extraordinary attainments in learning and philosophical science But it is not to be expected that we should, in this place, give a detailed account of their numerous systems and theories, since this would fill a large volume My intention only is, to adduce some few

specimens of their modes of thinking and reasoning on the Being and Nature of God, and on the Nature and Reason of Things, that some notion may be formed of the extraordinary advances they had made, in very early times, in the search of truth, and in the attainment of sound and useful knowledge

It is true, indeed, that their sublime theories and discoveries in science, will be found to be accompanied with many fanciful, not to say absurd, notions, but it will, notwithstanding, be seen from the evidence that shall be given, that they were Giants, both in arts and in science, ages before we, as a literary people, were out of our cradle *

That we do not presume too far, or subject ourselves to the danger of being con-

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* " It must, nevertheless, be remembered, that the "people of Asia had among them a number of fine writers, sublime poets, and eminent artists at a time "when our part of the world had neither learning, poetry, nor arts"

See "Introduction to the History of Nader Shaw—Preface, p 343 8vo"

tradicted in making this bold assertion, (as some perhaps may think it) will appear very satisfactorily, we think, from the following extract from Sir William Jones's Discourse on the Hindoos He there says, that "it will be sufficient in this Dis-"sertation to assume, what might be "proved beyond controversy, that we," *i e* the Members of the Asiatic Society, "now live among the Professors of those "philosophical tenets, which the Ionic "and Attic writers illustrated with all the "beauties of their melodious language "Thus we see the Brahmans and the Sar-"mans, mentioned by Clemens, disputing "in the forms of Logic, or discoursing on "the vanity of human enjoyments, on the "immortality of the Soul, her emanation "from the eternal mind, her debasement, "wanderings, and final union with her "source The six Philosophical Schools, "whose principles are explained in the "Dersana Sástra, comprise all the Meta-"physics of the old Academy, the Stoa, "and the Lyceum, nor is it possible to

"read the Védánta, or the many fine
"compositions in illustration of it, with-
"out believing, that Pythagoras and Plato
"derived their sublime theories from the
"same fountain with the Sages of India.
"The Scythian and Hyperborean doc-
"trines and mythology may also be traced
"in every part of these eastern regions,
"nor can we doubt that Wod or Oden,
"whose religion, as the Northern Histo-
"rians admit, was introduced into Scan-
"dinavia by a foreign race was the same
"as that of Buddh, whose rites were pro-
"bably imported into India about the
"same time."

See Asiatic Researches, vol 1, p. 424

But that we may be able to conceive justly of the surprising advances made in the most remote times, by the Hindoos, in literature, and the several branches of Philosophy, we shall now state in a few instances, the evidence we have of it

And first—to begin with their Theology—the following just and sublime senti-

ments entertained by them, concerning the Nature of God, and of the human Soul, will shew how correctly they conceived and reasoned on these most profound and interesting subjects.

Thus, concerning the Nature of the Supreme Being they maintain, that "Nothing exists absolutely but God—that He "alone existed at the first, and that He "must ever remain—that He is every "where always, and that except Him, the "first Cause, whatever may appear or not "appear, in the mind, is the mind's delu-"sion—that he is the Creator of all "things—the Cause of Generation and "Dissolution, of Death and the Resur-"rection, and in a word, that He is the "Beginning, the Middle, and the End of "all things."

See Maurice's Indian Antiquities, ii 291, and Asiatic Researches.

It is true indeed, that the Vedanti Philosophers, on some occasions, give to the

Sun the title of Devi or God, and not only speak of him as the Emblem of the Deity, but respect him as an object of high veneration, if not of adoration and worship "It is however (says Wilford) "their great and fundamental tenet, that "the only Being which has absolute and "real existence, is the Divine Spirit, infi-"nitely wise, infinitely benign, infinitely "powerful—expanded thro' the Universe, "not merely as the Soul of the World, "but as the Provident Ruler of it—send-"ing forth rays or emanations from his "own essence, which are the pure vital "souls of all animated Creatures whether "movable or immovable, i. e. both ani-"mals and vegetables, and which he calls "back to himself according to certain "laws established by his unlimited wis-"dom" They maintain also that Emanations from the Supreme Being, of a different kind, occasionally take place, and that these are sometimes bodiless, and, of course, invisible and, at others, embodied and obvious to sight. In this last mode

of appearing, the Avatars, or appearances of the Deity in a human form, are generally supposed to be born of Woman, but without any carnal intercourse, and whenever the Deity condescends to be thus born, the Puranas say, that the Person *is One,* but that there are *Two* Natures.

See Asiatic Researches, iii, p. 144
—vi, p 479.

Concerning the nature of the human soul, the Brahmins teach—that it is an emanation from the divine essence—that it is incorruptible, eternal indivisible, inexaustible—and that tho' it be divided for a time from its heavenly source, it will be finally united with it again—that the highest possible happiness will arise from its re-union, and that the chief good of mankind, in this transitory world, consists in as perfect a union with the Eternal Spirit, as the incumbrances of a mortal frame will allow—that, for this purpose, they should break off all connection with

extrinsic objects, and pass through life without attachments—that, if mere earthly charms have power to influence the soul, the idea of celestial beauty must overwhelm it in extatic delight—and lastly, that the soul bewails its disunion from the eternal Spirit, and waits passionately for the moment of its extinction, as a disengagement from earthly trammels, and the means of returning to its only beloved.

Such in part, says Sir W Jones, is the system of the Vedanti Philosophers, and best Lyric Poets, of India, and as it was a system of the highest antiquity in Persia, as well as in India, it may be added to the many other proofs of an immemorial affinity between the two nations

See Asiatic Researches, ii, p 62 8vo

Of the Morality taught by the Hindoos, we shall only observe, that they have innumerable treatises on this subject, written, we are told, "with sound reasoning and elegant perspicuity," and containing (as we believe will be found) principles

and precepts not less pure and comprehensive, than they are rational and well-founded. It has, we know, been asserted by some, that the wisest men of this world were ignorant of the two great Christian maxims, that we should act towards others as we would that they should act towards us, and that instead of returning evil for evil, we should, on the contrary, love our enemies, and return good even to those who hate and injure us But this is certainly not true, as is proved by indisputable evidence, as well from the writings of the Hindoos and Chinese, as from those of several Greek Philosophers, in which these obligations are enforced as fundamental principles of moral duty

When speaking of the progress made by the Hindoos in the knowledge of Medicine and Physiology, Sir William Jones tells us, that he was surprised to find how well they were acquainted with the latter of these branches of science, and when we reflect that the time he is speaking of,

when they had attained this knowledge, was not less than three thousand years ago, we cannot be less surprised than he was For even in the *Veda itself*, he says, he found an entire Upanishad, or Dissertation, on the internal parts of the human body, with an enumeration of the nerves, veins, and arteries, a description of the heart, spleen, and liver, and various disquisitions on the formation and growth of the fœtus. And it appears that such was the warmth with which the ancient Hindoos engaged in their Physiological disputes, that they led to violent schisms in religion, and even to bloody wars

With regard to natural Philosophy, or the science of natural bodies, we in Europe shall perhaps scarcely believe it possible that the ancient Hindoos should have made such extraordinary advances in this species of knowledge, as it is now discovered they have done, for not only may "the Theology and part of the Philoso- "phy of the immortal Newton be found "in the Vedas, but that most subtile spirit

" which he suspected to pervade natural " bodies, and to lie concealed in them, to " cause attraction and repulsion, the emis- " sion, reflection, and refraction of light, " electricity, calefaction, sensation, and " muscular motion, is described by the " Hindoos as a fifth Element endued with " those very powers, and the Vedas " abound with allusions to a force uni- " versally attractive, which they chiefly " ascribe to the Sun, which is thence " called *Aditya* or the Attractor."

But the most remarkable evidence of the knowledge they had of this attractive force or power, is given by Sir Wm. Jones in the following extract from the " alle- " gorical Poem of Shírín and Ferha'd, or " the Divine Spirit and a Human Soul " disinterestedly pious," —a work, which he describes as being from the first verse to the last " a Blaze of religious and po- " etical fire." The passage is too interesting not to be copied, and it is as follows " There is a strong propensity " which dances through every atom, and

"attracts the minutest particle to some
"peculiar object Search this universe
"from its base to its summit, from fire to
"air, from water to earth, from all below
"the moon to all above the celestial
"spheres, and thou wilt not find a cor-
"puscle destitute of that natural attrac-
"tability The very point of the first
"thread in this apparently tangled skein,
"is no other than such a principle of at-
"traction, and all principles beside are
"void of a real basis From such a pro-
"pensity arises every motion perceived in
"heavenly or in terrestrial bodies, it is a
"disposition to be attracted, which taught
"hard steel to rush from its place, and
"rivet itself on the magnet, it is the same
"disposition which impels the light straw
"to attach itself firmly on amber*, it is
"this quality which gives every substance
"in nature a tendency toward another,
"and an inclination forcibly directed to
"a determinate point"

These notions, Sir W. Jones observes, are vague and unsatisfactory, but he im-

mediately asks, "whether the last para-
"graph of Newton's incomparable work
"goes much further, and whether any
"subsequent experiments have thrown
"light on a subject so abstruse and ob-
"scure.

I have only to add under this head, that Proofs equally interesting and convincing, of the progress made by the Hindoos in the earliest times, in Astronomy, Geometry, and Arithmetic, are also to be met with in their writings. Indeed, they have compleat Treatises on these subjects, and the Suryá Siddhanta plainly proves, that the system of Astronomy, which is now universally received in Europe as the only true and rational one, was not only not unknown to the ancient Hindu Astronomers,* but that, in truth, it had its

* Tho' it has been proved, that the Antiquity of the Surya Siddhanta falls infinitely short of that which the Hindoos absurdly assign to it, and that its age, at the utmost, cannot exceed a thousand years, yet the system it teaches, is believed to be the same that has been for ages received and taught in the Philosophical Schools of Hindustan

origin among them or their neighbours, the ancient Chaldeans

But the science in which above all others, the Hindoos seem to have most delighted to speculate, and in which, indeed, they shone to the greatest advantage, was that of Metaphysics. In disquisitions on subjects of this kind, they appear to have gone as far as the human faculties could carry them—at least, it is certain that in no nation did the Learned go beyond them, since it is now generally believed, that many of the Grecian Philosophers studied in India, and that most of the tenets and theories, which, in after times, were taught in their schools, had previously had their origin in Hindustan *

But that some idea may be formed of the Metaphysics of the Indian Philosophers we shall now mention a few of the distinguishing doctrines maintained in their two principal Schools, which are

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* This was certainly Sir W Jones's opinion
See Memoirs of his Life, p 333, 8vo.

those of Gótama and Vyása The age in which the first of these Sages lived, is not known with certainty, but he is supposed to be the same person as Buddah, the founder of the religion which is distinguished by his name, and if he were the same person as is said to have married Ahalyá or Ila, the daughter of Noah, he must have been the first and oldest Philosopher in India The system of opinions taught in his school, was called Nyaya or Logical—a title which, Sir W Jones tells us, was very aptly bestowed, for it seems, he says, better accomodated to the natural reason and common sense of mankind, than any other anciently known in India. It admits the actual existence of *material substance* in the popular acceptation of the word *matter;* and comprises not only a body of sublime dialectics, but an artificial method of reasoning, with distinct names for the three parts of a Proposition, and even for those of a regular Syllogism It is true, indeed, that the followers of this system are charged with de-

nying the existence of *pure Spirit*, but it is believed that the accusation is founded on the low and interested malignity of the Brahmins, rather than on real truth. But the most celebrated School of India is that established by Vyasa, and distinguished by the name of *Vedánti*, because the doctrines it teaches are grounded on texts of the Veda. The fundamental tenet of this great Philosopher "consisted—not in de-"nying the existence of matter, i e of so-"lidity, impenetrability, and extended fi-"gure—but in correcting the popular no-"tion of it, and in contending that it has "no essence independent of mental per-"ception, that existence and perceptibi-"lity are convertible terms, that external "appearances and sensations are illusory, "and would vanish into nothing, if the "divine energy, which alone sustains "them, were suspended for a moment— "an opinion which (says Sir Wm Jones) "Epicharmus and Plato seem to have a-"dopted, and which was maintained in "Europe, in the last century, with great

"elegance, tho' with but little applause, 'because misapplied by the false reason-" ing of some unpopular writers who are 'supposed to have disbelieved in the mo-" ral attributes of the Deity." But however the tenets of Vyasa may have been misunderstood or perverted by learned men in Europe, it is certain that it was never the intention either of Vyasa himself, or of his Scholars in India, that any conclusions derogatory from the honor of God should be drawn from them,—since nothing, we are told, can be clearer to any one who studies the Vedanta (the tract in which this Philosopher delivers his peculiar doctrines, and which is said to express "the scope and end of the "Veda") than that the System which he has adopted, is wholly built on the purest devotion, and has the omni-presence, wisdom, and goodness of God for its basis. But besides the tenets we have already mentioned, it is farther maintained by the Vedanta Philosophers—" that all Spirit is

homogeneous—that the Spirit of God is, "in *kind*, the same with that of man, tho' "differing from it infinitely in *degree*; and "that, as all material substance is mere "illusion, there exists in this universe "only one generic, spiritual substance, "the sole primary cause, efficient, substan- "tial, and formal of all secondary causes, "and of all appearances whatsoever, but "endued in the highest degree, with wis- "dom, power, and goodness, and pro- "ceeding in his providential government "of the universe, by ways incomprehen- "sible to the most exalted of his crea- "tures."

Farther evidence might here be easily adduced, of the profound knowledge and extensive learning of the ancient Hindoos, but as our professed intention was only to give a few specimens of their great advances in Philosophical science, no farther proofs can be thought requisite.

CHAPTER XVIII

On the Evidences in India of the Expectation of a Saviour

AS upon the Fall of Man, the merciful and gracious God of the Universe was disposed to compassionate his unhappy condition, and, because his transgression arose from delusion, and not from a spirit of wilful rebellion, was positively determined to deliver him from the penalties of disobedience, and to restore him to a capacity of regaining his favour and eter-

nal happiness, we are naturally led to conclude, that he would make known to man this his benevolent intention towards him, since, otherwise, it was not possible that he should either become acquainted with, or form any hopes of, so gracious a purpose in his favour Agreeably then to this reasonable expectation, we find that God actually *did* reveal to Adam this his determination to redeem and save him, by declaring to him, that " the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head," —a Promise which, tho' couched in figurative and mysterious terms, was, nevertheless, sufficiently intelligible at the time, to afford to him and his help-meet the comfort they stood in *need of*, and to make them again, what God, no doubt, specially designed they should become, Moral and Religious Creatures What precise idea they formed from the words of the promise, of the deliverance to be wrought for them, we know not, nor is this the time to conjecture on the subject We may however not improperly observe,

that this at least they must have concluded from it, viz. that the victory which had been gained over them, should not be one that would last for ever—that their great enemy should, in his turn, be overcome—and that what they should recover by his being subdued, would at least be equal to that which they had lost by having been defeated. These, or some such ideas as these, we can have no doubt, were intended to be conveyed by the words of the promise, and were those which our first Parents conceived from them Calculated then, as they were, to raise them from despair, to cheer their desponding spirits, and to give them hopes of regaining their lost happiness, they would, we may be assured, carefully retain them in their memories, and transmit them to their children, who we may also believe would as certainly hand them down from generation to generation, as communications the most valuable, and above all others, of the greatest importance to them.

That we should therefore find evidences of the remembrance of so interesting a promise still existing among the several branches of the family of Noah, is no more than what we might reasonably expect, and the fact is, that to this day, we actually do discover traces of it in almost every nation we are acquainted with, whether civilized or barbarous It is true, indeed, that in most instances, the precise nature of the good to be expected from the accomplishment of the promise, was either not understood, or else lost sight of Still, however, it seems to have been so far at least understood, as to predict the coming of a divine person who should be a great benefactor to mankind, who should be entitled to our attention and reverence, and whose arrival we should have reason to welcome with joy and thankfulness, which, considering the very general terms of the promise, was perhaps as much as could reasonably be expected from it.

As to the Means by which the promise, or rather the expectation arising from it,

was preserved—these were for the most part, Oral Tradition Instances however there are, as well among the Heathen, as among the Jews, in which it appears to have been made a matter of early record —as, for example, in Hindustan, where we find the expectation of a Saviour to renovate the world, not only to have prevailed in the very earliest times, but to have been recorded in several of their sacred books, many hundreds of years before the time of Christ's appearing.

Thus, Wilford, who seems to have devoted much of his attention to researches on this important subject, tells us, that "the tradition of the coming of a Saviour 'from the West, is of very great antiquity "in the East, and that not only in several "of the Puranas, but also in the Vedas, as "he had been informed, predictions fore-"telling such an event, are frequently to "be met with, some of them as the Di-"vines in India declare, *very plain* and "others rather obscure" And he observes that it was probably in consequence of

the expectation which these predictions led them to entertain, that the Wise-men mentioned in the Gospel, were induced to visit Judea (the West) in search of the divine person, of whose arrival they considered the appearance of a new Star as a signal

The particular books which he refers to, as authorities for his assertions, are the Agni and Scanda Puranas, and the Vicramacharita, or history of Vicramaditya, a work of considerable repute, in which the traditions concerning this extraordinary person are collected, and which is said to have been written at the time the Roman Empire was in its most flourishing state, that is, as we may suppose about forty or fifty years before the coming of Christ, when, as we learn from Virgil's Pollio, the birth of some wonderful child was generally looked for by the Romans In these books we find many very remarkable particulars concerning this expected Saviour recorded, agreeing in so many instances with the predictions of the Jewish Pro-

phets, that no doubt, it is thought, can be entertained but that the same divine person was had in view in both of them.

Thus, at the same time that it is declared, that he would be the son of a Tacshaca or Mechanic,* it is also said that his conception would be miraculous and that he would be born of a Virgin And not only was his birth foretold a thousand, or as some say, two or three thousand years before he appeared, but it is positively said in the Scanda Purana, that "Saca (the name given to this extraordinary person, and which signifies the "mighty and "glorious King") should appear when "3100 years of the Cali-Yug were elapsed," a period which corresponds exactly with the commencement of the Christian Æra The place in which he

* By Tacshaca, it should seem that the Creator of the world is intended, as the Hindoos frequently speak of Him as the chief and best Artist From the manner in which the Tacshaca, i e the Father of the expected Saviour, is described in the Hindoo books, it is evident that he is considered as more than a mere Mortal

was to make his appearance, is declared in the Agni Purana, to be the great and holy city Pratishtana, seated on a rock, otherwise called Saileyam (Salem.) And the character given of him is, that he should be a Prince of Peace and Justice —that he should be great and mighty— that the spirit of righteousness should be in him—that his words should be truth itself, free from spite and envy—that his dominion would extend all over the world —and that he would convey souls to places of eternal bliss and it is also repeatedly asserted that the purpose of his coming was to check the power of the Demons, and to remove wretchedness and misery from the world. These predictions agree so exactly with many of those of the Prophets of the Old Testament, that one cannot but believe, either that they were copied from them, or were obtained from ancient revelations, either recorded in writing, or kept in memory from the very earliest times, among this highly civilized and enlightened people If indeed,

it could be made to appear that they were borrowed from the Jewish Scriptures, the supposition we have formed, of their being traditional memorials of the original promise delivered down from generation to generation among the Heathen, will of course be overthrown; and the end we have in view in bringing them into notice —that of corroborating the testimony of our Scriptures—will at once cease to be answered by them

But there is no necessity, no ground or reason for supposing this to have been the case, but quite the contrary, since we have pretty good evidence for believing, that these predictions were prevalent in India long before any of the Jewish Prophecies were written; and we see no reason why the promise of a Saviour, or at least the expectation excited by it, may not be supposed to have been retained in memory, as well by one civilized nation as by another "Whether this notion," viz of the coming of a Saviour, "was "borrowed from the Jews or not, is im-

"material to the present subject. It is by "no means necessary to have recourse to "this expedient in order to account for "this once prevailing opinion, and I am "inclined to think that this was not the "case" So speaks Wilford in his Essay on this subject, and the presumption is great, that Sir W Jones, could his opinion have been appealed to, would have said the same, since at the time that he guards against the supposition of Moses borrowing his accounts from the Hindoos or Egyptians, he does not even hint that it was at all probable that they derived their knowledge of remote events from his, or from any other Jewish writings whatsoever.*

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* In a Letter to Dr Ford, announcing to the University of Oxford, a present of a Copy of the four Vedas Sir W Jones observes, that "so far from opposing the "Mosaic account of the Creation, and of the Deluge, "they *confirm* it"

See Memoirs of the Life of Sir W Jones, p 376, 8vo

"From this source then (the supposed settlement of a "Colony of Jews on the Coast of Malabar) I dare not "assert that the Hindoos derived their purer theological

Thus then it appears that an expectation of a Saviour to regenerate the Universe, and to ameliorate the condition of mankind, was prevalent among the Hindoos, not only before the time of Christ's appearing, but in times far more remote—that it originated, not from any foreign source, but from predictions or notions of such an event, current from the earliest ages, in their own country—and that therefore, we have good authority for presuming, that it took its rise from the promise originally made to Adam at the Fall, still, as to its intended general effects, recollected among them. This I say, it is presumed, very satisfactorily appears, and if so then the circumstance of the prevalence

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" tenets, since those tenets appear to me to be of superior antiquity. It is only from Noah himself, their famed Menu, or else from one or other of the sons of the righteous Shem, who might make this happy region his " early abode, that the unfathomable antiquity of the " Brahminical Scriptures allows me to derive the grand principia of their theology."

See Maurice's Indian Antiquities, vol ii, p 296

of such an expectation among the Heathen, is a strong additional proof that what Moses wrote concerning the promise of a Saviour, is strictly true—and that as in this, so in all other instances, we have the best reason for giving the most free and willing credit to all that he has written

CHAPTER XIX

On the Conversion of the Hindoos to the Christian Faith

"AS to the general extention of our 'pure faith in Hindustán, there are at "present (says Sir W Jones) many sad "obstacles to it" After enumerating those, which he is of opinion will counteract all attempts to convert the Musselmans, he proceeds to speak of the Hindoos "They (says he) would probably "readily admit the truth of the Gospel,

" but they would, at the same time, con-
" tend that it is perfectly consistent with
" their Sastras. The Deity, they say, has
" appeared innumerable times, in many
" parts of the world, for the salvation of
" his creatures, and tho' we adore him
" under one appearance, and they in
" others, yet we adore, say they, the same
" God, to whom our several worships,
" tho different in form, are equally ac-
" ceptable, if they be sincere in sub-
" stance." Thus persuaded, the difficulty of bringing them over to the Christian Faith, must evidently be peculiarly great; and the only human mode of effecting their conversion, will perhaps be, as Sir W Jones thinks, to translate into the Sanscrit and Persian languages, such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah, as are indisputably evangelical, together with one of the Gospels; and with a plain prefatory discourse, containing full evidence of the very distant ages in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the Divine Person predicted

were severally made public, and then quietly to disperse the work among the well educated natives, 'with whom, if, ' in due time it failed of producing very " salutary fruit, by its natural influence, ' we could only lament more than ever, " the strength of prejudice, and the weak- " ness of unassisted reason " This was the opinion of Sir W Jones, when he wrote his " Discourse on the Gods of ' Greece, Italy, and India," and I mention it with peculiar satisfaction, not only as it tends to exalt our ideas of the superlative excellence of the Word of God, but as it shews the just conceptions of this great Scholar as to the powerful influence of divine truth, in working, by *its own natural force,* conviction on the human mind

Whether or not it was to this suggestion that we owe the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, is more than I have authority to assert, I confess, I have often thought that it was: But

however this may be, it is certain, that their practice, whether intended by them so to be or not, is in direct conformity to it; and that this is founded on reason and a correct knowledge of mankind, as well as justified by the persuasion, that "truth "shall of itself prevail"—and that God "will prosper his word to the end for "which it is sent," will, I have no doubt, in due time, appear, by the great and extensive effects we shall see produced by it

It is the positive declaration of God by his Prophet, that "the knowledge of the "Lord shall extend over the earth, as the "waters cover the sea," and as all his words are truth, we may be assured, that they shall be fulfilled in their season It is true, indeed, that God proceeds by slow and almost imperceptible steps, in the accomplishment of his great designs, and we must admit, that the prospect of the universal prevalence of truth, can, at present, be viewed only at a distance But tho' the Almighty proceeds *slowly* he still proceeds *surely*, and we cannot pos-

sably look back upon the great events, which have occurred on the wide theatre of the world, during the last twenty or thirty years, without being convinced, that very great advances have been made towards the accomplishment of the important work of diffusing the knowledge of the truth among all nations

With respect to Hindustan in particular—much has certainly been done in the course of the above-mentioned period, towards making the saving truth of the Gospel known throughout that country. The Holy Scriptures have been dispersed thro' almost all the states in the Peninsula, in their own respective languages, Schools for the education of the native children have been established in many of the principal cities, and Missionaries, admirably qualified by their learning, as well as by their zeal and piety, have also been appointed in various stations which seemed to afford the best prospect of usefulness, and much good fruit has already sprung forth from their labours Here

then is a beginning made—a foundation laid—and all that is now wanting to insure success to the underraking, is prudent exertion* on the part of the Missionaries, and the zealous support and co-operation of all those who have it in their power in any way, to promote it True indeed it is, that the work is a most arduous one, and beset with difficulties apparently insurmountable But it should be recollected, that it is the work of the Almighty, and that when he wills and works, nothing can let or hinder the accomplishment of his purpose However slowly, therefore, the work may proceed, or however great and numerous the obstacles opposed to it may be, we may still expect that it will go on and prosper, and in God's good time, be accomplished

* By *prudent exertion* is here meant—Prudence in proportioning their zeal and exertions to their *bodily powers* From a want of due regard to this prudence some valuable lives, it is thought, have been lost, and hence the cause of spreading the knowledge of Christianity has greatly suffered

But it must not be forgotten, that the aid and exertions of man are necessary to this end, for in human concerns, God almost always works by human means and instruments, and the belief that He works for us, is always to be considered as a reason why we should work also Considering then how blessed is the employment of "delivering men from the power of "darkness, and translating them into the "kingdom of God's dear Son," and by how many obligations we are bound to promote it, not only ought we to enter gladly upon it, but to rejoice that we are called upon to be the agents in it

It has been pretty clearly ascertained, that the early inhabitants of this Island—the ancient Britons—were involved in the same darkness and ignorance, and in the practice of the very same abominable rites and superstitious observances, as those which now prevail in most of our provinces in India.* Happy therefore as we have rea-

* We are well aware that there are those who speak of the Hindoos as remarkable for their *mild virtues* and

son to think ourselves, in having been

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exalted piety, and would insinuate, that they would be no gainers by being converted to Christianity But even admitting that examples of mild virtue, and of exalted piety, as it is most erroneously called, are sometimes to be seen among them, yet we would ask, Are such examples commonly to be met with? On the contrary, are they not very rare—we mean those of the exalted piety spoken of, and seldom to be found among the great mass of the people? It is true, that the general character of the Hindoos, is that of mildness and gentleness, and here and there a Devotee is to be met with, who may seem to be absorbed in devotion and heavenly contemplation But it is pretty well known, that the standard of morality is, in most respects, very low in India, and that the piety of the Devotee, or Brahmin, is little better than a wild enthusiasm, having neither reasonable motives, nor a suitable object That the reader may judge whether this character of the Hindu Morality and Devotion is a just one, he has only to refer to chap xv, p 162, of this book, and to Sir Wm Jones's testimony to the Necessity of a Divine Revelation, as mentioned in chap xx p 19 As to the duties and practices imposed by the Brahminical religion—these, it is well known, are not only grossly indecent and idolatrous, but barbarous and cruel in the extreme Witness, the exposure frequently of their children, and sometimes of their aged and helpless parents, to be washed away by the waves of the Ganges—the burning of their widows with the bodies of their deceased husbands—and the numbers of frantic enthusiasts who, every year out of devotion to Jaggernaut are voluntarily crushed to death by the wheels of the car of that horrid idol These practices if not absolutely required by the Hindoo religion are sanctioned by it, and thought to be meritorious, and some or other of them are daily occurring, as our countrymen can testify How far they be-

brought out of the vale of darkness, and from under the shadow of death, and in being blessed with the light of truth, and the knowledge of salvation—how can we—beholden as we are to Divine Providence for these unmerited favours—how can we think ourselves excused from the charge of ingratitude, unless we use our best exertions in communicating that light to others, which God has diffused so abundantly over us?

Besides, it is the Command of Christ, that we should "go and teach all nations" "—and that we should pray the Lord of "the Harvest to send forth labourers into "his harvest." And what shall we have to say for ourselves, if, when the inquiry shall be made—what we have done in this

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speak mild virtue and exalted piety in the people who approve and practise them, we leave those to say, who think so highly of the morality and devotion of the Hindoo. I shall only observe farther, that it is said by a late writer, that "he does not think that there is among "them (the Hindoos) any thing like what the Deist of "Europe would call a pure Deism, with which he so "liberally invests them."

See "Sketches of India, by an Officer," p. 209.

way for Christ, and for our fellow-creatures for his sake, we find we have done nothing?

Our intimate connection with the people of India, and the many great advantages which in our national capacity we derive from that connexion, give them also a claim to some return from us, and none do I know of, that we can make to them more valuable in itself more worthy of ourselves, or that can prove more beneficial to them, than the Gospel Give them This and we give them the Light of Life.— Give them This, and we give them the most substantial, the most enduring Good —we give them the Means of Grace, and a well grounded Hope of everlasting Glory In short, Give them This, and we give them That which without it, they can never obtain, viz. the *Assurance* of Salvation. The utmost that any other religion can afford to man, is only *Hope* of pardon But the Gospel of Jesus Christ gives *Assurance* of it, and not of pardon only, but of perfect reconciliation with

God, and of eternal life and glory · And this is a *distinction*—an advantage *to* which, I cannot but here observe, the attention of the Hindoos should be, in the most especial manner, directed by our Missionaries For how well soever they may think their present religion adapted to their wants, and the circumstances of their country, or however highly they may be disposed to reverence its authority, yet here, in regard to *Assurance* founded on *absolute Promise* and the acceptance of an all-sufficient satisfaction for sin—it must be confessed, even by them, to be defective, and must yield to the superior pretentions of the Gospel

Bound, then, as we are, both as Christians and as Englishmen, to make the "ways of God and his saving health" known to the poor and Idol-devoted Hindoos, how painful must one day be our sensations, if it should appear, that we have never felt or shewn any sympathy for their deplorable condition—never done

any thing towards delivering them from darkness and the power of Satan!

Love and a compassionate solicitude for the happiness of our fellow-men, and, above all, for the eternal welfare of their immortal souls, should be the great and ever-influencing principle of every disciple of Jesus Christ, and unhappy indeed must we suppose the final fate of that man to be, who shall have been wholly wanting in the exercise of these God-like affections.

Whilst, then, "the disposition to hear "and receive the word of truth is, as we "are told it is, daily increasing amongst "the natives of India*—whilst they are "calling anxiously and earnestly upon us "to send them teachers, and are drawing "inferences from our slackness in comply-"ing with their wishes, not only discre-"ditable to us as Christians but injurious "to the cause of Christianity."† Let not

* See the 19th Report of the Church Missionary Society, p 141 and 145

† See Extracts from Jay Narrain's Letter Report as above, p 138

us whose "light is come, and on whom "the Glory of the Lord is risen," be backward in "letting our light shine "upon others" but let us shew, both by word and by deed, both by our prayers, and by the liberality of our contributions, that we have the welfare of their souls, and the extension of Christ's kingdom at heart "The calls of Providence" to these ends, it has been said, and said but too truly, "far outrun the "Charity of the Church" This is a melancholy reflection, and ought to stimulate us to the use of every possible effort to enable us effectually to meet these importunate calls Considerations to urge us to action in this great and good cause we have already mentioned several, but there is yet one remaining to be noticed and it is this, that whatsoever we do in this way, for our heathen brethren, will be considered by our Saviour as done *to himself*, and that "*great* will surely be the reward "of it in Heaven"

CHAPTER XX.

Sir William Jones's Testimony to the Truth of the Mosaic History, and of Revelation in general

THE testimony of men of learning and science to the truth of Scripture, and of revealed religion in general, has frequently been appealed to as a kind of evidence in its favor, which ought, in some degree, to influence the judgment of mankind to the belief and acceptance of it. As we

cannot, however, admit for a moment, that the witness of man in this case, is at all wanted, so neither can we allow, that it ought to have the weight which some would attach to it It is enough for us to know with certainty, that the faith we have embraced, and the books from which it is derived, have the testimony of God to the truth of them, for, as without this, they would be wholly without authority, so with it, they want no more. It must however be a ground of confidence, and consequently, a satisfaction to a Believer in the Scriptures, to know that the first Scholars, and wisest men, of almost every age, have received them as "the Word of "God,' because from this fact it may be fairly argued, that they have undergone the test of examination, and have not been found wanting, since no one can suppose that such learned men would have acknowledged their pretensions to the character of divine truth, unless they had stood the trial of the strictest scrutiny.

With regard to the testimony of Sir

William Jones, I have no hesitation in saying, that I do not know the man, whose judgment would have greater influence on my mind than his. I have either read, or heard it mentioned,* that there was a time, when he was inclined to be rather sceptical on religious subjects, no doubt, because he had not then given them sufficient consideration Having however, afterwards, searched the Scriptures, and examined well the evidence in support of their claims to the character of divine revelation, he became a Believer, and no one ever questioned the sincerity of his professions Indeed, his sentiments on these subjects, have only to be read in his own words, in order to be believed, the serious, solemn, and decided manner, in which he speaks upon them, being such as to leave no room in the mind of any one, either to question his knowledge and

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* Since writing the above, I have found the circumstance mentioned in his Life by Lord Teignmouth

See p 81 8vo

competence to judge, or to imagine that he could possibly have thought otherwise than as he speaks. The judgment therefore of such a man, if human authority be allowed to have any weight at all, must be worthy of no little attention. And I will venture farther to say, that it is by no means less deserving of consideration, on account of the circumstance I before noticed, viz. that his faith in Revelation was at *one time not* unattended with doubts. On the contrary, I feel inclined on this very account, to attach the more importance to his determinations, inasmuch as I can rest perfectly assured, that they were not formed hastily, or without the fullest investigation. For no one, who is at all acquainted with the integrity of Sir William Jones's mind, his ardent love of truth, and earnest solicitude for the universal prevalence of it, can suppose for a moment, that he would have become a Believer on the credit of another, and still less, that his scruples would have been satisfied and silenced, unless he had been

first clearly convinced, that they were groundless, and utterly unworthy of longer consideration.

Having premised these few remarks, with a view of shewing the weight to which the judgment of Sir W Jones is entitled, I shall now introduce some very interesting passages from his Asiatic Discourses and other writings, and leave them to speak for themselves.

" The most ancient history of the hu-
" man race, and the oldest composition
" perhaps in the world, is a work in He-
" brew, which we may suppose at first, for
" the sake of our argument, to have no
" higher authority than any other work
" of equal antiquity, that the researches
" of the curious had accidentally brought
" to light It is ascribed to *Musah*—for
" so he writes his own name, which, after
" the Greeks and Romans, we have
" changed into Moses, and though it
" was manifestly his object to give an his-
" torical account of a single family, he has
" introduced it with a short view of the

" primitive world, and his introduction has
" been divided, perhaps improperly, into
" eleven chapters. After describing with
" awful sublimity the creation of this uni-
" verse, he asserts that one pair of every
" animal species was called from nothing
" into existence—that the human pair
" were strong enough to be happy, but
" free to become miserable—that, from
" delusion and temerity, they disobeyed
" their Supreme Benefactor, whose good-
" ness could not pardon them consistently
" with his justice, and that they received
" a punishment adequate to their disobe-
" dience, but softened by a mysterious pro-
" mise to be accomplished in their de-
" scendants."

See Discourse on the " Origin, &c of
" Nations."

" Thus, on the preceding supposition,
" that the first eleven chapters of the
" book which it is thought proper to call
" Genesis, are merely a preface to the
" oldest civil history now extant, we see

"the truth of them confirmed by antecedent reasoning, and by evidence, in part highly probable, and in part certain. But the connection of the Mosaic history with that of the Gospel, by a chain of sublime predictions unquestionably ancient, and apparently fulfilled, must induce us to think the Hebrew narrative *more than human in its origin*, and consequently true in every substantial part of it, tho' possibly expressed in figurative language, as many learned and pious men have believed, and the most pious may believe without injury, and perhaps with advantage to the cause of revealed religion."

See "Origin and Families of Nations" Asiatic Researches, vol III

'Theological inquiries are no part of my present subject, but I cannot refrain from adding, that the Collection of Tracts which we call, from their excellence, the Scriptures, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true

" sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer " morality, more important history, and " finer strains both of poetry and elo- " quence, than could be collected within " the same compass from all other books " that were ever composed in any age or " in any idiom The two parts, of which " the Scriptures consist, are connected by " a chain of compositions which bear no " resemblance in form or style to any that " can be produced from the stores of Gre- " cian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian " learning The antiquity of those com- " positions no man doubts, and the un- " strained application of them, to events " long subsequent to their publication, is " a solid ground of belief that they were " genuine predictions and consequently " *inspired* "

See Discourse on the Borderers, &c
Asiatic Researches, iii, p. 19

" I, who cannot help believing the Divi- " nity of the Messiah, from the undis " puted antiquity and manifest completion

"of many Prophecies, especially those of "Isaiah, in the *only* person recorded by "history, to whom they are applicable, "am obliged of course, to believe the "sanctity of the venerable books to which "that sacred person refers as genuine. "But it is not the truth of our national "religion, as such, that I have at heart— "it is truth itself, and, if any cool, un- "biassed reasoner will clearly convince "me that Moses drew his narrative "through Egyptian conduits from the "primeval fountains of Indian literature, I "shall esteem him as a friend for having "weaned my mind from a capital error, "and promise to stand among the fore- "most in assisting to circulate the truth "which he has ascertained."

See Essay "on the Gods of Greece, "Italy, and India."

Asiatic Researches, i, p. 221. 8vo.

But the truth of this proposition viz. that a connection subsisted between the

old idolatrous nations of Egypt, India, Greece, and Italy, long before they migrated to their several settlements, and consequently, before "the birth of Moses "will in no degree affect the truth and "sanctity of the Mosaic History, which if "confirmation were necessary, it would "rather tend to confirm. The Divine "Legate, educated by the daughter of a "King, and in all respects highly accom-"plished, could not but know the mytho-"logical system of Egypt, but he must "have condemned the superstitions of "that people, and despised the speculative "absurdities of their Priests, though some "of their traditions concerning the Crea-"tion, and the Flood, were grounded on "truth."

"We cannot then, surely, deem it an "inconsiderable advantage that all our "historical researches have confirmed the "Mosaic accounts of the primitive world, "and our testimony on that subject ought "to have the greater weight, because if "the result of our observations had been

"totally different, we should nevertheless,
"have published them—not indeed with
"equal pleasure, but with equal confi-
"dence; for *truth is mighty*, and, what-
"ever be its consequences, *must always*
"*prevail.*"

See Essay "on Asiatic History"
Asiatic Researches, vol iv, p. 3.

When speaking of Jesus Christ as the *only begotten Son of God*, Sir W Jones observes, that "the words *only begotten* are 'applied transcendently and incompa-'rably to him alone, and as for *me* who "believe the Scriptures, I cannot refuse "him an appellation, tho' far surpassing "our reason, by which he is distinguised "in the Gospel The circumstance that "he was born of a Virgin fully justifies "the application of the phrase, and who-"ever believes this, and that he was the "Messiah, and yet objects to this title of "*only Son of God*, only cavils at words "without being able to object to the

"substance of our faith consistently with "his own"

See Asiatic Researches, ii, p. 89.

To these testimonies of Sir W. Jones, to the truth of Revelation, I shall add only one extract more from his writings, the intention of which is, to prove his belief as well of the *necessity*, as of the truth of it It is to be found in his eleventh and last discourse to the Asiatic Society, where, speaking of the *morality* of the Hindoos, he intimates, that how perfectly so ever the true principles of moral conduct might be understood by the learned, yet that they were unknown to "millions of Hindoos, Chinese, Persians, and other Mohamedans, who toil "for their daily support, nor, were they "known ever so perfectly, would they "have a divine sanction with the multitude, so that in order to enlighten the "minds of the ignorant, and to enforce "the obedience of the perverse, it is evident *a priori*, that a revealed religion

"was necessary in the great system of "Providence."

See Asiatic Researches, vol. 4, p 178

The following Propositions are given in the Memoirs of the Life of Sir W Jones, written by Lord Teignmouth They were found, he says in a Hebrew Copy of the Prophecy of Hosea, in the hand-writing of Sir W —and they are here added to the foregoing Extracts, it is conceived, not improperly, as they not only shew that he was indeed a Believer, but point out the mode of reasoning, by which he demonstrated to his satisfaction, the divine authority of the Christian Religion, and became, as any other ingenuous inquirer by attending to the same argument, must become, firmly settled in the faith of the Gospel.

"*Proposition* I

"There is as *much* reason to believe, "that the writings of Isaiah and the He-

" brew Prophets, as that those of Homer
" and the Greek Poets, are *more ancient*
" than the time of Jesus."

" OBJECTION.—Some men might have an
" interest in forging Isaiah."

" ANSWER.—Forged writings would
" have been more *in point*. Those of
" Isaiah bear no marks of forgery, and
" the Jews themselves, who were puzzled
" by them, acknowledged their *antiquity*."

" *Proposition* 2.

" These ancient writings, especially
" Isaiah, allude to some great event, and
" to some real extraordinary person, 'who
" 'was put to death and complained not.'"
&c. Isaiah 53.

" *Proposition* 3.

" The life and death of Jesus, his vir-
" tues and doctrines, tho' not his miracles,
" are as much to be believed, as the life
" and death of Socrates, his virtues, and
" his doctrines."

"*Proposition* 4.

"No person in the history of the
" Jews, coincides with this account, ex-
" cept Jesus"

'Therefore Jesus was the subject of
" their writings, which are consequently
" inspired, and He a person of an extraor-
" dinary nature, that is, the Messiah"

" If this be just reasoning, we may be-
" lieve his miracles, and *must* obey his
" law."

" If difficulties occur, and we are asked
" 'how they can be solved?' we may safely
" answer, 'We do not know, yet we may
' truly be, and justly be, called Christians"

To these Propositions the following note is subjoined — 'What must be the " importance of a book of which it may " be truly said, if this book be not true, " the religion which we profess, is false," and consequently, we add, all our hopes of the pardon of sin, and of acceptance to the favor of a reconciled God, are vain and groundless'

NOTES.

Note to page 21

THE discoveries of Geology, it is said by the Professors of that Science, have made it to appear, "that the present system of this Planet is "built on the wreck and ruins of one more an-"cient" This notion was however, at first, thrown out by them only as a conjecture, but it seems now to be spoken of by some of them, as an ascertained fact, and it therefore becomes us to inquire a little into the evidence we have, relative to the formation of our Globe

Moses, the Geologists admit, does not mention the existence of a former world, or give any countenance to their supposition, any farther than that he does not *deny* it but, then, it was foreign to his purpose, they tell us, to speak of what before had been, "his object being merely to relate

" what was done by the Creator, in order to fit
" the Globe for the reception and abode of the
" human race."

See Professor Buckland's Inaugural Lecture, page 24

Now, as we have no other authority for receiving this novel position as true, but the discoveries and conjectures of the Geologists, we may, we presume, be allowed to question whether these are a sufficient ground for our belief of it. Their grand argument is, the wonderful irregularity and confusion in which the internal parts of the Earth are now found to be lying, and of which they cannot admit the Deluge to have been an adequate cause—an argument, which, for many reasons, we can by no means admit to be satisfactory or conclusive. Indeed, from their own accounts, in some instances it appears, we think, that what they consider as irregular in the structure of the earth, and contrary to the order which might have been expected to be found, viz. the placing the various strata of rocks in an inclined, and not in an horizontal position, is the effect of Design, and of the greatest wisdom, skill, and contrivance, rather than of accident or commotion. And if the testimony of Scripture be allowed to have any weight in this inquiry, as unquestionably it ought

to have, we shall undoubtedly be led by it to form the same conclusion

For there we meet with passages almost innumerable, particularly in the books of Job, and of the Psalms, which lead us to believe, that the foundations of the earth were laid by the Creator with the utmost regularity and order, and that from the centre to the surface of the Globe, every thing was done with method and design, and in the greatest perfection, and it was, no doubt, from the consideration of his works in this view of them, that the Almighty was led to declare, when he had finished them, that "they were all "very good" Let appearances then be now whatever they may, we have no good ground for believing that God operated only on a mass of ruins, when he made the world, and was contented with merely bringing the *surface* of the supposed wreck into form and order, but quite the contrary * and therefore, if any derangement be now discovered, of what we suppose to have been

* Maclaurin, in his "Account of Sir I Newton's Philosophical Discoveries," observes, that "all our accounts "of nature are full of instances of this kind . of a manifest contrivance and again, "that his (the Creator's) "influence penetrates the inmost recesses of things and "that he is (and of course, always was) equally active "and present every where"—See p 400

the original structure of the earth, it must, we are persuaded, have been occasioned by some catastrophe that has happened to it since, and why the "breaking up of the great deeps" at the Deluge, should not be considered as a cause sufficient to have produced it, we know not. To us, the expression "breaking up of the great deeps," seems to imply such a complete upseting of every thing internal, as to justify the supposition, that the greatest imaginable confusion and derangement might have ensued from it.*

With respect to what the Geologists say of Moses, viz that he does not *deny* their notion that "the present world was formed out of the "ruins of one more ancient," we observe, that he certainly does not deny it, and probably for the very best reason, because he neither knew nor thought any thing about it. He wrote from inspiration, and could know little or nothing of the creation and structure of the earth but what was revealed to him. What was communicated to him, he no doubt recorded, and if nothing relative to the destruction of a former world he recorded, we may, it is presumed, safely conclude,

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* Such is the notion the ancient Hindoos had of the commotion and disorder into which the Earth was thrown by the Deluge, that they describe it "as churned by the "mountain Mandar."

that nothing was revealed, and yet, if any thing of the kind supposed, had actually happened, reasons, we think, might be assigned why it should have been revealed and recorded For if a former world had been destroyed, as it could not have been effected without the act of the Almighty, we may be assured, that there must have been some good and urgent cause for it, as, for example, because its inhabitants, if it were inhabited, were not obedient to his will, or because it did not, for some reason or other, answer the ends he proposed in creating it For we are not to fancy that the Creator makes worlds without a view, and destroys them at random, or for sport, as we set up nine-pins, and bowl them down for our diversion Supposing, then, that a former world had really existed and been destroyed for some such reason as we have now imagined, is it not reasonable to believe that God would reveal this to Moses, and direct him to record it, as a warning and lesson to the people of his new creation, that unless they fulfilled his will, they should likewise perish? Surely, this is no more than what might be reasonably expected, and if so, it "must be an error, to assert that it was foreign "to the purpose of Moses to speak of this sup- "posed 'more ancient world,'" and we may

justly infer from his silence on the subject, that no such world had ever existed.

Another conclusion which the Geologists have come to, in consequence of their discoveries, is, that the "more ancient world" they speak of, was *not the abode of man*, but of brute beasts only; or, at any rate, that man was not an inhabitant of it, at the time the great commotion which destroyed it, took place. This, they say is a certain fact, (see Bakewell, p 428) and speak of it as such, with as much confidence, as if it were as clearly demonstrated as a proposition in Euclid, whilst the only reason they have to give for it is, that they have not discovered the bones of human beings imbedded in subterranean rocks, as they find those of the Mammoth, Elephant, &c. Now, tho' we neither pretend to be able to account for the non-appearance of human bones in the state and situations in which those of other animals are found, nor are disposed to think that the old Hindoos, who say, "that the waters of "the Flood, on retiring, swept away all human "bones with them into the ocean," knew more of the matter than we, or the Geologists do, yet are we far from thinking it so wonderful a *fact*, as they call it, and so difficult to be accounted for, as they seem to consider it since, if the Hindu notion be rejected as inadmissible, tho' we know

not why it should be so, there are probably many other ways of satisfactorily accounting for it, without our being driven to the necessity of adopting the conclusion of the Geologists, involving in it, as it seems to do, the absurd supposition, that God made a world for brutes only.

QUERY.—In what parts of the world have the Geologists made their deep searches for human relics? Not, we suspect, in that quarter of the Globe which the Antediluvians are known to have chiefly inhabited, and where, if any where, human remains might be expected to be found, but in Germany, France, England, &c., countries, which, before the Flood, were undoubtedly very thinly peopled, if indeed, they were at all inhabited.

That the Geologists are a most active, enterprising, and useful set of men, and that their discoveries have greatly extended the boundaries of knowledge, and will prove of the utmost benefit to mankind, there can be no doubt: and no one, who is in the least acquainted with their indefatigable searches and inquiries, and justly estimates the advantages resulting from them to society, will for a moment, with-hold from them the praise they are so justly entitled to. But it must still be confessed, that it is thought, that by their conjec-

tures and theories, they have done some mischief. Would they but confine themselves to facts as they find them, and simply state these to the world, which is what Cuvier, one of their ablest Professors, strongly recommends, they would keep within their proper province, and do all that is perhaps to be desired of them but when they proceed to draw positive conclusions, and to build new theories, from their probably, as yet, imperfect discoveries, and, consequently, imperfect knowledge, they rather injure, than serve the cause of truth, and lay themselves open to deserved censure

Notes to page 8

"The word Pagoda," says Maurice, when describing the Cavern Temple at Elephanta, "is "formed from the Persian word Pout, signifying "idol, and gadah, a temple"—See Antiq ii, 145. But Pout is also one of the names of Buddah. He is so called by the Siamese, by whom he is worshiped, and by whom Wednesday is named after him Van Pout. Supposing the word to be spelt according to its etymology, it would be Poutgadah, i e the Temple of Pout or Buddah.

Mr. Grose, who, himself, visited the Elephanta Cave or Temple, is of opinion, that the species of

worship anciently practised in that temple, was different from that which now prevails in Hindostan: and who can doubt but that it was so; since, otherwise, how came that temple and every other of the same description, into disuse and ruin, as they are now seen to be.

The worship of the Lingam, it is said, "is diametrically opposite to the tenor of the Vedas," i. e. to the religion of the Bráhmins.—See Maurice's Antiq. ii, 164. But there is not a Cavern Temple in India, that we have ever read of, in which the Lingam is not to be found conspicuously placed as a chief object of veneration. How obvious then is the inference, that these could not have been temples of the Bráhmins, but must have been those of a sect, whose religious system prevailed in the country before that of the Bráhmins was introduced into it? And what sect could this have been, unless it were that of the Buddahists?

Note to page 164.

In Mr. Evans's "Sketch of the Denominations "of the Christian World," it is said, p. 21, note,—that "some curious particulars respecting the "religion of the Hindoos, communicated in the

"Asiatic Researches, seem to indicate that it is a "corruption of the Christian Religion." I could wish to be informed in what part of the Asiatic Researches these curious particulars are to be found. for, tho' I have searched those volumes very diligently, for information relative to the Hindu religion, I do not recollect to have met with any particulars that could justify me in thinking that that religion is in any respect a corruption of Christianity and indeed, I am at a loss to know with what propriety the Hindu religion can be said, or supposed, to be a corruption of the Christian (even admitting that the doctrines of the one, do in some instances resemble those of the other) when it is well known, that the Hindu religion was the received and established religion of several Eastern nations, considerably more than a thousand years before the Christian Religion had its origin.

Mr Evans does not give us the least room to conjecture what the *curious particulars* are, which he says, "seem to indicate that the Hindu religion is a corruption of the Christian," but we cannot be long at a loss to determine what they are The three Powers, Creative, Preservative, and Destructive, of their God Bráhma, the Hindoos have personified, and represent under the three forms of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, from whenc

some have hastily supposed that they maintain a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, similar to the doctrine entertained by us Christians: this, it is believed, is one of the particulars alluded to. Another is, the notion they have of the *regeneration* of the *twice-born* man. But as the first of these notions, tho' it may indeed, bear some resemblance to the Christian doctrine, has certainly a very different meaning, "and cannot, as Sir W. Jones has justly said, "be compared with it without profaneness," so the other, tho' it may have a resemblance to the Christian doctrine in *name*, differs as widely from it, both as to the Cause and Effect of Regeneration, as light from darkness

See Institutes of Menu, chap ii, 179 and Asiatic Researches, vol ii, 119.

But, as I have observed before, admitting a resemblance of these doctrines of the Hindoos to those of the Christian, yet still, how they can be considered as *derived* from the Christian Religion, which the notion of their being corruptions of that religion implies, is what I cannot conceive, considering that the Christian Religion had not its rise 'till so many centuries after that of the Hindoos.